

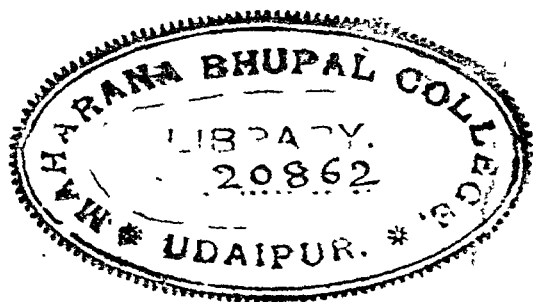
# Ideas and Ideals

REVISED EDITION

EDITED BY

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## P R E F A C E

This revised edition of 'Ideas and Ideals' is specially designed for the Degree classes of Indian Universities. The reader will note that the pieces included in this book are all taken from eminent modern authors. Language changes with the passage of time, and English is no exception to this rule. Modern English is in many ways different from what it was in the centuries gone by. For instance we do not like now an ornate style, and the vogue of long rhythmic sentences, as they were written in the nineteenth century, is now extinct. On the spoken side English now is tending more and more towards brevity. In the naturalistic dialogues of the modern drama and fiction, for example, there are numerous incomplete sentences and expressions. A full idea is often expressed only through one or two words. When English has changed and is changing, it is essential that we should keep before our students models of the kind of English prose as it is in actual vogue now. If models of old fashioned prose are placed before them they are likely to adopt an obsolete style of writing and speaking English.

The essays included in the book are both reflective and humorous. The intelligent student would appreciate their style and would observe that though reflective in nature they are not particularly informative. For, to please and not to inform is the object of the modern essay. The essayist affords intellectual delight, he does not strive to add to our knowledge.

The pieces included in this book are of various types—literary, commercial economic. Among the literary pieces there are two. One act plays one of which is a comedy and the other a tragedy. Comedy gives delight, but the pleasure which tragedy affords is of a more exalted kind. Besides, it raises some of the fundamental problems of human life, which it is beyond the scope of comedy to present. The student will try to find out for himself whether the tragic play included in this book raises any fundamental problem of life or not. The commercial and economic pieces discuss the most modern problems in the sphere of economics and commerce. It is hoped that through them the student will come in touch with the current economic problems and that they will create in him a desire to study these and similar other problems in greater detail.

D K C

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(In spite of their best efforts the publishers have not been able to ascertain the copyright proprietorship of 'The Rise of Capitalism' from "The Socialist Movement" by J. Ramsay MacDonald, included in this selection.)

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## Notes

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## ON MISUNDERSTANDING

A newspaper comment on something I recently wrote has given me a momentary illusion of having really got hold of what is the matter with modernity. For that serpent is as slippery as an eel, that demon is as elusive as an elf. But for the moment I thought I had him—or at least a perfect specimen of him. I wrote recently to the effect that music at meals interferes with conversation. And certain people at once began to discuss whether music at meals interferes with digestion. And in that one detail I seemed to have caught the very devil himself by the tail.

Those who read my article know that I never even mentioned digestion. I never even thought of it. It never crosses my mind while I am eating meals. It certainly never crosses my mind when I am listening to music. Least of all did it ever cross my mind while I was writing that particular article. And the idea that it should cross anybody's mind, not to say occupy anybody's mind, in connexion with the other controversy seems to me a compendium of all the dullness, baseness, vulgarity, and fear that make up so much of the practical philosophy of this enlightened age. What I complained of was not that music interfered with animal assimilation, but that it interfered with human speech, with the talk of taverns like the Tabard or the Mermaid, with the talk of Dr. Johnson or Charles Lamb, with the

*Noctes Inbrosianae* or the Four Men of Sussex, with all the ancient Christian custom of men arguing each others leads off and shouting each other down for the glory of reason and the truth. Those great talkers no more thought about their digestion at dinner than the heroes of the *Iliad* or the Song of Roland felt their own pulses and took their own temperatures in the thick of the battle. It is true that I did not confine myself to complaining of meals being spoilt by music. I also complained of music being spoilt by meals. I was so impertinent as to suggest that if we want to listen to good music we should listen to it, and honour it with our undivided attention. A fine musician might surely resent a man treating fine music as a mere background to his lunch. But a fine musician might well murder a man who treated fine music as an aid to his digestion.

But what interests me is this swift, unconscious substitution of the subject of digestion, which I had never mentioned, for the subject of human intercourse, which I had. It has hidden in it somewhere a sort of secret of our social and spiritual abnormality. It is a sort of silent signal of all that has gone wrong with our brains and tempers and memories and hearts—and also, doubtless, digestions. It is so significant that it is worth while to attempt to resolve it into the elements that make it the monstrous and ominous thing it is. Before this evil and elusive creature escapes me once more, I will attempt to dissect it and make a sort of diagram of its deformities.

First, there is that stink of stale and sham science which is one of the curses of our times. The stupidest or the wickedest action is supposed to become reasonable or respectable, not by having found a reason in scientific fact, but merely by having found any sort of excuse in scientific language. This highly grotesque and rather gross topic is supposed to take on a sort of solemnity because it is physiological. Some people even talk about proteids, vitamins—but let us draw a veil over the whole horrid scene. It is enough to note that one element in the hideous compound is a love of talking about the body as a scientific thing—that is, talking about it as if it were a serious thing.

Next, there is a morbidity and a monstrous solitude. Each man is alone with his digestion as with a familiar demon. He is not to allow either the wine or the music to melt his soul into any sociable spirit of the company. Wine is bad for his digestion and music is good for his digestion. He therefore abstains from the one and absorbs the other in the same inhuman isolation. Diogenes retired into a tub and St. Jerome into a cave; but this hermit uses his own inside as his cavern—every man is his own cask, and it is not even a wine-cask.

Third, there is materialism or the very muddiest sort of atheism. It has the obscure assumption that everything begins with the digestion, and not with the divine reason; that we must always start at the material end if we wish to work from the origins of things. In their hapless topsy-turvy philosophy, digestion



is the creator and divinity the creature They have at the back of their minds in short, the idea that there is really nothing at the back of their minds except the brute thing called the body To them, therefore, there is nothing comic or incongruous about saying that a violin solo should be a servant of the body or of the brute for there is no other god for it to serve

There also hides in the heart of this philosopher the thing we call hypochondria and a paralysing panic I have said that it serves the body but many men in many ages have served their bodies I doubt if any men in any ages were ever so much afraid of their bodies We might represent in some symbolic drama a man running down the street pursued by his own body It is inadequate to say of this sort of thing that it is atheism, it would be nearer the truth to say it is devil worship But they are not even the red devils of passion and enjoyment They are really only the blue devils of fear

Then there is what there always is in such philosophy the setting of the cart to draw the horse They do not see that digestion exists for health and health exists for life and life exists for the love of music or beautiful things They reverse the process and say that the love of music is good for the process of digestion What the process of digestion is ultimately good for they have really no idea I think it was a great medieval philosopher who said that all evil comes from enjoying what we ought to use and using what we ought to enjoy A great many

modern philosophers never do anything else. Thus they will sacrifice what they admit to be happiness to what they claim to be progress; though it could have no rational meaning except progress to greater happiness. Or they will subordinate goodness to efficiency; though the very name of good implies an end, and the very name of efficiency implies only a means to an end. Progress and efficiency by their very titles are only tools. Goodness and happiness by their very titles are a fruition; the fruits that are to be produced by the tools. Yet how often the fruits are treated as fancies of sentimentalism and only the tools as facts of sense. It is as if a starving man were to give away the turnip in order to eat the spade; or as if men said that there need not be any fish, so long as there were plenty of fishing-rods. There is all that queer inversion of values in talking about music as an aid not only to dinner, but even to the digestion of dinner.

There is more generally a flat, unlifted, unlaughing spirit, that can accept this topsy-turvydom without even seeing that it is topsy-turvy. It does not even rise high enough to be cynical. It does not utter its materialistic maxim even as a pessimist's paradox. It does not see the joke of saying that the Passion Music can assist a gentleman to absorb a veal cutlet, or that a Mass of Palestrina might counteract the effect of toasted cheese. What is said on this subject is said quite seriously. That seriousness is perhaps the most frivolous thing in the whole of this frivolous society. It

is a spirit that cannot even rouse itself enough to laugh

In short, it is the magic of that one trivial phrase, about music and digestion, that it calls up suddenly in the mind the image of a certain sort of man, sitting at a table in a grand restaurant, and wearing a serious and somewhat sullen expression. He is manifestly a man of considerable wealth, and beyond that he can only be described by a series of negatives. He has no traditions, and therefore knows nothing of the great tradition of living that has enriched our literature with the rights and feasts of the gods. He has no real friends, and therefore his interests are turned inwards, but more to the state of his body than of his soul. He has no religion, and therefore it comes natural to him to think that everything springs from a material source. He has no philosophy, and therefore does not know the difference between the means and the end. And, above all, there is buried deep in him a profound and stubborn repugnance to the trouble of following anybody else's argument, so that if somebody elaborately explains to him that it is often a mistake to combine two pleasures, because pleasures, like pains, can act as counter irritants to each other, he only receives the vague impression that somebody is saying that music is bad for his digestion.

—G. K. Chesterton

## THE GREAT STRIKE

I shall never really think of Wilfrid Brown again as the Brown I have often seen departing with his golf-clubs for Little-hampton, nor as the Brown I knew during the days of the recent industrial dispute, now so happily ended, but always as the Brown who stalked through my terrible night-mare—Brown the arch-Communist leader, Brown the unbreakable Bolshevik.

The real Brown during the Great Strike, well and patriotically though he behaved, was a little too obvious for my taste in his conversational openings. He bubbled, to put it rather grossly, with clichés which did not seem to me to further the process of thought.

"The national life," he said to me under the lilac tree at the corner of the road by the pillarbox where the postman was busily collecting letters, "is paralysed."

"Industry," he remarked a moment later, as we were almost run down by the butcher's boy on a tricycle, "is absolutely at a stand-still."

And once again, as he sank back luxuriously into the Rolls Royce which had offered him a life into London, "The fabric of civilization has broken down."

I made no comments, except on one evening, when, after reading a badly typewritten statement posted in the window of a small fruiterer's shop, he suddenly clutched me by the arm and gazed earnestly into my eyes.

"This is Moscow," he said.

I threw the ghastly thing away

It was, I believe, on the very same morning that Brown came to my house, a pale Napoleonic figure with the appropriate wisp of hair over his brow. He had been moving everywhere amongst the strikers, encouraging, exhorting, imploring them to resist. He brought to me the terrible news that the Picture-going Public had decided to go in. They had been totally unable to resist the allurements of the topical film showing pictures of themselves on strike.

\* \* \* \*

It was the beginning of the end. A day or two later the Government precipitated matters by declaring a three days' holiday. Nobody had anticipated this Machiavellian masterstroke. We now had no offices to go to, no business cares to which we might attend. A few of us foamed moodily round the National Gallery, mingling with the Art-loving Public, which, never very strong, had always held aloof from the Soviet Union. Some of us planted our snapdragons, and a few were to be found in the Reading Room of the British Museum, which was also an unpicketed post.

But early on the second morning Wilfrid Brown came to my house again.

"I am going," he said, and I can remember the icy horror that gripped my heart at the tone of his words—"I am going with my wife and little Mypania to Hampton Court."

"How?" I asked, looking at him with bloodshot eye.

"By the Underground," he said hollowly,  
 "and the Southern Railway."

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It was then that I awoke with a shriek.

--E. V. Knox

## THE MOST CURIOUS ANIMAL

Curiosity is the first of the sins. On the day on which Eve gave way to her curiosity, man broke off his communion with the angels and allied himself with the beasts. To day we usually applaud curiosity, we think of it as the alternative to stagnation. The tradition of mankind, however, is against us. The fables never pretend that curiosity is anything but an evil. Literature is full of tales of forbidden rooms, that cannot be peeped into without disaster. Fatima in *Bluebeard* escapes punishment, but her escape is narrow enough to leave her a warning to the nursery. A version of the Pandora legend imputes the state of mankind to the curiosity of one disastrous fool who raised the lid of the sacred box with the result that the blessings intended for our race escaped and flew away. We have cursed the inquisitive person through the centuries. We have instinctively hated him to the point of persecution. The curious among mankind have gone about their business at peril of their lives. It is probable that Athens was a city as much given to curiosity as any city has ever been, and yet the Athenians put Socrates to death on account of his curiosity. He was accused of speculating about the heavens above and inquiring into the earth beneath as well as of corrupting the youth and making the worse appear the better reason. If so, we may be read as the story of the magnificent rear-guard action fought during

several thousand years by dogma against curiosity. Dogma is always in the majority and is therefore detestable, but it is also always beaten and is therefore admirable. It rallies its forces afresh on some new field in every generation. It fights with its back to the sunrise under a banner of darkness, but even when we abominate it most we cannot but marvel at its endurance. The odd thing is that man clings to dogma from a sense of safety. He can hardly help feeling that he was never so safe as he is in the present in possession of this little patch his fathers have bequeathed to him. He felt quite safe without printed books, without chloroform, without flying machines. He mocked at Icarus at the last word in human folly. We say nowadays 'as safe as the Bank of England' but he felt safer without the Bank of England. We are told that when the Bank was founded in 1694 its institution was warmly opposed by all the dogmatic believers in things as they were. But it is against curiosity about knowledge that men have fought most stubbornly. Galileo was forbidden to be curious about the moon. One of the most difficult things to establish is our right to be curious about facts. The dogmatists offer to provide us with all the facts a reasonable man can desire. If we persist in believing that there is a world of facts yet undiscovered and that it is our duty to set out in quest of it, in the eyes of the dogmatists we are scorned as heretics and charlatans. Even at the present day, when the orthodoxies sit on shaky thrones, dogma still opposes itself to curiosity at many



points. A great deal of the popular dislike of physical research is due to hatred of curiosity in a new direction. People who admit the existence of a world of the dead commonly feel that nonetheless it ought to be taboo to the too-curious intellect of man. They feel there is something uncanny about spirits that makes it unsafe to approach them with an inquisitive mind. I am not concerned either to attack or defend Spiritualism. I merely suggest that a rational attack on Spiritualism must be based on the insufficiency of the evidence put forward in its behalf, not on the ground that the curiosity which goes in search of such evidence is in itself wicked.

It is odd to see how men who take sides with dogma give themselves the airs of men who live for duty, while they regard the more curious among their fellows as licentious, trifling, irreverent and self-indulgent. The truth is, there is no greater luxury than dogma. It puts an eminence under the most stupid. At the same time I am not going to deny the pleasures of curiosity. We have only to see a cat looking up the chimney or examining the nooks of a box room or looking over the edge of a trunk to see what is inside, in order to realize that this is a vice, if it is a vice, which we inherit from the animals. We find a comparable curiosity in children and other simple creatures. Servants will rummage through drawer after drawer of old, dull letters out of idle curiosity. There are men who declare that no woman could be trusted not to read a letter. We persuade our

selves that man is a higher animal, above curiosity and a slave to his sense of honour. But man, too, likes to spy upon his neighbours when he is not indifferent to them. No scrupulous person of either sex would read another person's letter surreptitiously. But that is not to say that we do not want to know what is in the letter. We can hardly see a parcel lying unopened in a hall without speculating on what it contains. We should always feel happier if the owner of the parcel indulged us to the point of opening it in our presence. I know a man whose curiosity extends so far as to set him uncorking any medicine-bottles he sees in a friend's house, sniffing at them, and even sipping them to see what they taste like. 'Oh, I have had that one,' he says, as he lingers over the bitter flavour of strychnine. 'Let me see,' he reflects, as he sips another bottle, 'there's digitalis in that.' Half the interesting books of the world were written by men who had just this sipping kind of curiosity. Curiosity was the chief pleasure of Montaigne and of Boswell. We cannot read an early book of science without finding signs of the pleasure of curiosity in its pages. Theophrastus, we may be sure, was a happy man when he wrote:

However, there is one question which applies to all perfumes, namely, why it is that they appear to be sweetest when they come from the wrist; so that perfumers apply the scent to this part.

To be curious about such matters would keep many a man entertained for an evening. Some people are so much in love with their

child's whim. It is an affair of the senses, and an extraordinarily innocent one. It is a vanity of the eye or ear. It is another form of the hatred of being left out. So many human beings do not like to miss things. We saw during Saturday's aeroplane raid how far men and women will go rather than miss things. Thousands of Londoners stood in the streets and at their windows and gazed at what seemed to be the approach of one of the plagues of Egypt. No plague of locusts ever came out of the sky with a greater air of the will to destruction. It was as though the eastern sky were hung with these monstrous insects, leisurely hovering over a people they meant to destroy. They had the cupidity of hawks at one moment. At another they had the innocence of a shoal of little fishes. Shell-smoke opened out among them like a sponge thrown into the water. It swelled into larger clouds monstrous in shape as the things doctors preserved in bottles. But the plague did not rest. One saw a little black aeroplane hurry across them, a mere water beetle of a thing, and one wondered if a collision would send one of them to earth with broken wings. But one did not really know whether this was the manoeuvre of an enemy or the daring of a friend. There was never a more astonishing spectacle. A desperate battle in the air would have been less of a surprise. But that there should have been nobody to interfere with them! . . . . . Yes, it was certainly a curious sight and London was justified in putting its head out of its house, like a tortoise under its

shell, till the bombs began to fall. Still, the more often they come the less curious we shall be about them. A few years ago we gladly paid five shillings for the pleasure of seeing an aeroplane float round a big field. There is a limit, however, to our curiosity even about German aeroplanes. Speaking for myself, I may say my curiosity is satisfied. I do not care if they never come again.

—*Robert Lynd*

## ON THE PLEASURE OF TAKING UP ONE'S PEN

Among the sadder and smaller pleasures of this world I count this pleasure, the pleasure of taking up one's pen.

It has been said by very many people that there is a tangible pleasure in the mere act of writing: in choosing and arranging words. It has been denied by many. It is affirmed and denied in the life of Doctor Johnson, and for my part I would say that it is very true in some rare moods and wholly false in most others. However, of writing and the pleasure in it I am not writing here (with pleasure), but of the pleasure of taking up one's pen, which is quite another matter.

Note what the action means. You are alone. Even if the room is crowded (as was the smoking room in the G.W.R. Hotel, at Paddington, only the other day, when I wrote my "Statistical Abstract of Christendom"), even if the room is crowded, you must have made yourself alone to be able to write at all. You must have built up some kind of wall and isolated your mind. You are alone then; and that is the beginning.

If you consider at what pains men are to be alone: how they climb mountains, enter prisons, profess monastic vows, put on eccentric daily habits, and seclude themselves in the garrets of a great town, you will see that this moment of taking up the pen is not least

happy in the fact that then, by a mere association of ideas, the writer is alone

So much for that Now not only are you alone, but you are going to 'create'

When people say "create" they flatter themselves No man can create anything I knew a man once who drew a horse on a bit of paper to amuse the company and covered it all over with many parallel streaks as he drew When he had done this, an aged priest (present upon that occasion) said, "You are pleased to draw a zebra" When the priest said this the man began to curse and to swear, and to protest that he had never seen or heard of a zebra He said it was all done out of his own head, and he called heaven to witness, and his patron saint But there<sup>1</sup> He persuaded no one, and the priest scored

All this, then, is a digression and it must be admitted that there is no such thing as a man's "creating" But anyhow, when you take up your pen you do something devilish pleasing, there is a prospect before you You are going to develop a germ I don't know what it is, and I promise you I won't call it creation but possibly a god is creating through you, and at least you are making believe at creation Anyhow, it is a sense of mastery and of origin, and you know that when you have done, something will be added to the world, and little destroyed For what will you have destroyed or wasted? A certain amount of white paper at a farthing a square yard (and I am not certain it is not pleasanter all diversified and

variegated with black wriggles)—a certain amount of ink meant to be spread and dried: made for no other purpose—a certain infinitesimal amount of quill: torn from the silly goose for no purpose whatsoever but to minister to the high needs of Man.

Here you cry "Affectation! Affectation! How do I know that the fellow writes with a quill? A most unlikely habit!" To that I answer you are right. Less assertion, please, and more humility. I will tell you, frankly, with what I am writing. I am writing with a Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen. The nib is of pure gold, as was the throne of Charlemagne, in the "Song of Roland". That throne (I need hardly tell you) was borne into Spain across the cold and awful passes of the Pyrenees by no less than a hundred and twenty mules, and all the western world adored it, and trembled before it when it was set up at every halt under pine trees, on the upland grasses. For he sat upon it, dreadful and commanding; there weighed upon him two centuries of age; his brows were level with justice and experience, and his beard was so tangled and full that he was called "bramble-bearded Charlemagne". You have read how, when he stretched out his hand at evening, the sun stood still till he had found the body of Roland? You must read about these things.

Well, then, the pen is of pure gold, a pen that runs straight away like a willing horse; or a jolly little ship; indeed, it is a pen so excellent that it reminds me of my subject; the

pleasure of taking up one's pen

God bless you, pen ! When I was a boy, and they told me work was honourable, useful, cleanly, sanitary, wholesome and necessary to the mind of man, I paid no attention to them than if they had told me that public men were usually honest, or that pigs could fly. It seemed to me that they were merely saying silly things they had been told to say. Nor do I doubt to this day that those who told me these things at school were but preaching a dull and careless round. But now I know that the things they told me were true. God bless you, pen of work, pen of drudgery, pen of letters, pen of posings, pen rabid, pen ridiculous, pen glorified. Pray, little pen, be worthy of the love I bear you, and consider how noble. I shall make you some day, when you shall live in a glass case with a crowd of tourists round you everyday from ten to four. pen of justice pen of majesty and of light. I will write with you some day a considerable poem, it is a compact between you and me. If I cannot make one of my own, then, I will write out some other man's, but you, pen, come what may, shall write out good poem before you die, if it is only the *Allegro*.

The pleasure of taking up one's pen has also this, peculiar among all pleasures, that you have the freedom to lay it down when you will. Not so with love. Not so with victory. Not so with glory.

Had I begun the other way round, I would have called this Work "The Pleasure of laying



down one's Pen". But I began it where I began it, and I am going to end it just where it is going to end.

What other occupation, avocation, dissertation, or intellectual recreation can you cease at will? Not bridge—you go on playing to win. Not public speaking—they ring a bell. Not mere converse—you have to answer everything the other insufficient person says. Not life, for it is wrong to kill oneself; and as for the natural end of living that does not come by one's choice; on the contrary, it is the most capricious of all accidents.

But the pen you lay down when you will. At any moment without remorse, without anxiety, without dishonour, you are free to do this dignified and final thing (I am just going to do it)....You lay it down.

—*Hillaire Belloc*

## STUDENT DAYS

Those were queer, lively years. We felt, as every one who was young with us felt, that we were beginning a new age. So we were, but we were misinformed on a vital detail. The arts, we thought, were stirring in their sleep. Even the novel—you can't conceive the effect on us of *The New Machiavelli*. It scarcely seems possible now that we took that so hard. But think that to us the rigid Victorian code was still real. It was something we had consciously to reject. We saw it as narrow, timid and cruel, and not at all as a hard self discipline or as an ideal. We were not easy about it. We talked of our freedom from this, that, and the other, but in our minds the Victorian habit persisted like an old coat hung behind the door, that we shall one day take down and put on. In the meantime we talked, and ran about London looking for second hand copies of Anatole France, or stood in the rain to listen to Socialist speeches, indifferent, because we had heard it before, and yet believing in it and in fraternity and equality and all that.

It is very hard to recall days when everything was new and of interest. We were all then absurdly hopeful, tireless, and confident. In those days it would not have crossed my mind that I might fail or be hurt to death.

I cannot remember which year, whether spring or autumn, we saw the post-impressionist paintings. We had never seen any until this

Sydney and I went, expecting to laugh, and came away filled with an amazing excitement. We were so stirred that we walked about in the rain, half shouting. And now I cannot even remember the pictures, except for a Cezanne that remains in my mind because of one most lovely sunlit wall. I would give anything to feel again that supreme exhilaration. We went again a day or two later, taking O. Harland with us. Out of perversity (as I feel sure) he said he loathed the new painting. He said it was indecent, like a tipsy old woman kicking up her heels. We dragged him out, hot and vexed. He halted us in front of a policeman in the doorway, and asked him what he thought of the pictures.

"Nothing very much," the policeman said.

"There you are," he shouted at us. "It's your over-sophisticated minds that make you admire that muck. The pure, untutored mind of democracy can see what a sham it all is."

Still shouting furiously at each other, we went to a Lipton's cafe and ate a quantity of black sticky cake, such as only pure untutored stomachs can digest. Afterwards we went to a Wagner concert and quarrelled all the way home—I detested Wagner in those days. There was a thick fog. We climbed on to the bus at Waterloo Station and took the front seats outside. Sydney leaned out over the front. "Driver! drive like hell to Camberwell Green," he said. The man drove straight into a lamp-post. There was a great noise of broken glass and some shouts and then the driver's angry

voice putting the entire blame for the accident on us. Most unfairly, I think.

Sometimes we went to a music hall—I feel very sorry for the young who never heard Marie Lloyd—she was herself “infinite variety”, and the entire programme of the new non-stop shows is a thinner entertainment. She could make you laugh until you cried, but one or two of her songs were so harsh that the tears came first. The very way she glanced at you, with that mingling of hard cynical mirth, boldness, and an indescribable air of having been *used*, was like being slapped in the face by life. Have you ever lived in Brixton? We walked about it several times a week, and it always made me think of Marie Lloyd—there was one big glaring shop in which, for all the lavishness of display, you never forgot that money has to be earned, in a street under the railway, open stalls of butchers’ meat, artificial silk stockings, oranges, the market of the slums, streets of sordid houses, streets of tall, once genteel houses on the defensive behind spoiled gardens, the respectability of Tulse Hill and the squalor of Kennington—the whole of it rank with life, life oozing between the bricks, strong ugly, bitter, nasty, beautiful, and unabatable. That was Marie Lloyd. She’s dead now—and I daresay Brixton is different. And one day they’ll clean it up. It will be a good riddance—but it’s queer to think that whatever else a safe, clean, orderly world produces it wouldn’t be able to produce a Marie Lloyd.

One of her favourite eating places was in

Brixton. It was called Biucchi's, and I think it was in a basement. I remember that once at eleven o'clock at night O. Harland and I were coming home through Brixton. I was tired and lagged, and he was losing patience with me. Suddenly he stood still, the light from a street lamp falling on him in blue-white splinters and wedges. "Where did you lunch?" he said. I couldn't remember. At last I said I thought I must have forgotten to eat any lunch. "You didn't have any dinner. Did you get your tea?" Surprised, I understood now why I was so tired. "You are a calf," he said angrily: "how much money have you got?" We turned out both our pockets, and made between us three and six. Would you believe it, Biucchi's was able to serve hot chicken at eleven at night? That was for me—O. Harland had coffee only, and watched me eat.

Another place was in Richmond. Nearly at the top of the hill there was a charming house in which the rooms were furnished with deep pile carpets, gate-legged tables, and deep, soft arm-chairs. Teas were a shilling a head, and they used to place uncut cakes on the table and leave you to help yourself. Of course the idea was that the lovers for whom the elegant rooms were meant would be feeling too delicate to eat.

But the best was Appenrodt's Lager Hall, in Coventry Street. I suppose we went there a dozen times in all—when one of us had just been sent money. You went downstairs, and there was the wide room, with the German

inscriptions on the walls and the quick friendly waiters, and now and then a deep blurred voice speaking German. The smells of cigar smoke and coffee belended in the warm air. I remember a very large German woman, fair, with brown sleepy eyes. She spread her arms, letting her furs slip to the floor and said, "So will ich sie selbst essen." The way she spoke, rolling her eyes, and the foreign words, made it seem rich and mysterious and made us look to each other and half feel that we had been caught into a strange town. I watched, fascinated, her thick white fingers stripping the skin from the fruit.

There was something very good, friendly, and stolid about that place. Everything was good—the food, the coffee, the waiters—and yet if you were shabby it did not matter. You could still sit there and take your ease. It is one of the things that were lost to London during the war. It has never been replaced—perhaps it is irreplaceable, but upon my soul I do grudge it. So I do the Viennese cafe that used to stand at the corner of Hart Street and New Oxford Street. Once I had coffee and brioches there in the middle of the morning—I now forget who took me there and paid for it. But the Viennese brioches were delicious, and I made myself a promise that when I could afford it I would come here often for breakfast. Alas, that long narrow room is now a bank. Could any war change be more sordid or more typical of a spoiled London?

There cannot have been four shabbier poor

scholars in London. But neither had any poor scholar a life so finely gay. We were not tax-payers or citizens, we had no business to call us to regular lives, we ate meals that other people had prepared, and took no thought for the morrow, how we should eat, or wherewithal we should be clothed. Like that we were happy because we were outside the machine. As soon as that vagabond life comes to an end, when from poor scholars you become tax-payers, heads of families, and what not, you may be comfortable, but are you happy? Of course not. You have possessions—and that alone is enough to destroy your peace of mind. Besides, you have become conscious of time. You feel its works in your bones, like the death-watch beetle in an ageing fabric. You have responsibilities, you reckon up your income, buy books, houses, pictures, beds, tables, electric sweepers, run a business, write books, travel, get children, tune in to Daventry for the news, vote, save money, buy a piece of land for a grave. I have been happier than any woman. But in those days I was happy and (to cram up into a word what is too complex to be said in a page) free.

Towards Christmas we bought a flagon of Australian burgundy. It was vile stuff. We drank it late at night round the fire, and ate toasted muffins and sardines. This is true, and I live.

—*Storm Jameson*

## THE GREAT CRASH OF 1929

Up till the winter of 1929 the world had been slowly recovering. It was still suffering from the effects of the war, it was distracted in more senses than one, and it may well have been unconsciously hoping for an 1830 or 1848 to clarify its problems for it. However it was to have something very different—not an upheaval directed by men who, however unpractical, had ideals to inspire them and ideas to offer to their followers, but an impersonal, uncontrolled and insensate disaster, whose origins it did not understand and whose effects were almost wholly evil. So much stress, in earlier sections of this history, has been laid on the defects and disappointments of the post-war world that a short time must be spent on showing why 1929 became for millions of people the last of the golden years to which they looked back.

Firstly, they had security against war. The League of Nations was still, it was true, only a League of some nations. The United States remained sulkily absent, Russia was neither willing nor allowed to come in. But even thus truncated it had stopped promising little wars in the Åland Isles, Silesia and Macedonia, it might not have strength to hold back major powers, but no major power had shown any desire to flout it. Italy, in particular, had declared Fascism was "not an article for export" and frequently paid more deference to



League opinion than more democratic states. Secondly, there had been a great advance in scientific and industrial knowledge; particularly astonishing to the ordinary man were the adoption of flying as a normal means of travel and the universal use of the wireless for communication. Thirdly, there had at last come a period of prosperity for the ordinary man. There were many exceptions—there were countries like Britain where a foolish financial policy kept a million men unemployed or like China where poverty was endemic—but on the whole the population of the world had more time for leisure and more to eat than it had had before. The population of the United States indeed seemed almost fantastically rich. These easier conditions were reflected in a greater political freedom. The Eastern European nations did not cease persecuting their minorities, but they became milder. The League's Minorities and Mandates Commissions made oppressive practices more difficult and more unpopular. Near Eastern nations like Irak and Egypt did not, it is true, secure uncorrupt and truly democratic governments: but the governments they had were at least at the level of England of the eighteenth century which was in the circumstances a great advance. There was even a rapprochement between the British and the Indian nationalists. The outside world had ceased to harry Russia; after a controversy between Trotsky and Stalin over the possibility of "Socialism in one country alone" the latter had won, and turned Trotsky out (1927) with

his theory of "permanent revolution" Nobody but professional revolutionaries seemed distressed by this the Soviet Union next year turned to a "Five Year Plan" for industrial re equipment which seemed to be, if anything a guarantee of peaceful intentions to its neighbours The mildness with which the Bolsheviks treated their deposed leader, who was merely exiled, was frequently contrasted with the savagery of the French Revolution

The collapse of 1929 as no one will forget who lived through it began on the 24th October, in Wall Street It signalized itself merely by the hasty selling, at rapidly falling prices, of securities which the wiser operators already knew were over priced But from that moment the panic spread until the whole surface of the world was affected by industrial paralysis paralysis is an apt word, for it was like a disease, but a disease with no cause in nature The starvation, the silent factories, the goods thrown away, the men standing idle were the results of human activities There had been no famines, floods or national disasters (indeed at one time men even prayed for these to relieve their troubles), there had not even been wars or devastations Nevertheless in the richest country in the world the United States nearly twenty million people were facing starvation in the early months of 1933 (Mr Hampden Jackson) The condition of poorer countries was correspondingly worse The crisis continued beyond 1933—indeed, it can be argued

that it did not really cease until war and the preparations for war ended it.

There had been commercial crisis for nearly a century. Economists, observing them dispassionately as if they had been uncontrollable phenomena (as they may well have been, while private ownership was uncontrolled), noted that they recurred roughly every ten years. None, however, had been quite so disastrous as this; for this one was intensified by the consequences of particular follies. Most of these have been enumerated, but the reader may need to be reminded of them. The first folly was the political and economic clauses of the Versailles Treaty: the predictions of Keynes and others were at last being realized. Old-established units like the Austrian empire had been broken up, and feeble little states, each with its tariff wall, had taken their place. Even reforms which were desirable in themselves turned out to be dangerous; the substitution of peasant proprietors for semi-feudal landlords in the centre and east, for example, had caused a fall in agricultural production, and it was only by agriculture that these countries could live. Worse than this was the effect of "reparations"—the belief that the Allied countries could indefinitely live off Germany was having its inevitable results. The Dawes plan, it had been calculated, meant that Germany would pay 80 marks every second or 288,000 marks an hour for an unlimited time; the improvement of the Young plan limited the period—to fifty-nine years! Such avaricious dreams could only be realities so long

as America was prepared to lend money lavishly to Germany to make payments possible: the moment this ceased to be so, not only Germany but all those leaning on her would collapse. Most disastrous of all, probably, was the financial policy of the United States. The States tried to enforce, by all the means they could short of war, the payment of the "war debts" of their Allies at the same time their rulers, as blind as they were greedy, prevented the payments being made. Ultimately all international payments had to be made in goods or gold: successive American Congresses increased tariffs until foreign goods were effectively excluded (The highest known tariff was actually enacted as late as 1930). For a while the problem was evaded by the piling up of a useless mass of gold at Fort Knox, drawn from all foreign countries, for a little longer, again, it was evaded by American loans to other countries, but so soon as these loans had to be called in, disaster was certain. As if to make sure that their people's suffering would be as acute as possible, United States business men developed instalment selling (hire-purchase) to such an extent that nearly every other family was in debt for some article or other, and gambling in stocks increased so much that in the larger cities even stenographers and labourers were in the game.

The political effects of this disaster, which is now seen to be a dividing line in history, were double. In countries where a change of government was constitutionally possible, the

government was thrown out. If it was "Left", a "Right" government was installed, or vice versa—it was almost a matter of chance. Where dictatorship ruled, governments became more ruthless at home, and abroad realized that they could at last act precisely as their narrowest greed suggested to them. The peace-loving powers had no longer the power or will to protect the beginnings of international organizations; the dictators could, and they did, attack their weaker neighbours and start on the path to the Second World War.

Certain countries, as has been said, went "Left". Alfonso of Spain hurried out of the country in 1930 and left it to the Republicans. President Hoover and the Republican Party of the United States had so consistently claimed credit for American prosperity that they could not escape responsibility for the disaster: they were dismissed in 1932 by an electorate which was not to forgive them for very many years. The Siamese King was compelled to give up his autocracy the same year, and accept some sort of popular control. But these, at spots so widespread across the world, were almost the only cases where men reacted to the crisis by a new determination to control their own affairs; elsewhere, the story was one of despair, or of acquiescence in the revival of the old methods of tyranny and violence.

A new rash of dictators spotted the South American Continent. Getulio Vargas installed himself in Brazil at the end of 1929. Bolivia, Peru, and the Argentine became dictatorships

next year, Chile in 1931. In 1932 ignoring the League's appeals, Bolivia and Paraguay embarked on a long and bloody war for a jungle called the Gran Chaco, the war gave an opportunity for Fascist and Nazi agents to enter South America and practise their chosen profession. In India the short period of co-operation between British and Indians ended in 1930 in the resumption of "civil disobedience", in the Near East King Fuad of Egypt chased out his Parliament, and the Iraqi Government in 1933 celebrated its new freedom from the British by quite coolly and deliberately massacring the Assyrians for being Christians.

In Europe Pilsudski rigged the Polish elections so as to make himself dictator at the end of 1929, Kings Alexander of Yugoslavia and Carol of Roumania dispensed with Parliamentary control, a Bulgarian military dictatorship was set up in 1934 and Greek one (under Metaxas) in 1935. Esthonia and Latvia became dictatorships in 1934, the Portuguese dictator, Salazar, presented himself with a new statutory authorization in 1933. Dollfuss, a Catholic politician, wiped out the Austrian Socialists by violence in Vienna, and installed a Catholic-Fascist regime, in February 1934. Probably the worst of all the results of the crisis, for the future, was the installation of the Nazis in power in Germany in 1933, to be described later, the most immediately shocking was the invasion of Manchuria by Japan in 1931. The existing pacific government of Japan was turned out by Army officers, and its more

important members murdered methodically at later dates; the new government deciding correctly that the League powers would not intervene, took a trivial pretext to invade Manchuria, a Chinese province that Chiang Kai-Shek had not succeeded in controlling, occupied it and refused to move.

What seemed to make the crisis insoluble (though the causes were really deeper) was the course of events in Britain. London was still the financial centre of the world; the British government was a Labour government headed by an unusually vague-spoken politician, Ramsay MacDonald. It had no majority in Parliament; if it had wished to meet the crisis by a Socialist Policy it would not have been allowed to do so; in the upshot it was able to do nothing.

American investment in Germany and Austria ceased in 1929. In 1930, as Wall Street became more and more desperate, American lenders began to call back their loans, and within a few months the Credit Anstalt, a bank that financed the majority of Austrian industry, faced bankruptcy. President Hoover suggested a moratorium on Reparations payments, Chancellor Brüning of Germany a Customs Union with Austria. But France, whose Government had been taken over by a politician named Tardieu who thought the Versailles treaty "too moderate", obstructed both proposals. British and German banks had to lend money to prop up the Austrian bank; in so doing they only transferred the danger to themselves. A run

started on the German banks, and in July 1931 the famous Darmstadt Bank failed. The weight now fell wholly on London, and the run on gold was such that by August it was clear that the Bank of England could not survive without foreign aid. Gold was to be found only in Paris and New York, Paris would lend none, and New York insisted upon changes in British policy (notably reductions in unemployment pay) which the Cabinet would not accept. MacDonald, the Premier, in consultation with his Conservative opponents, turned his own party out and formed a "National Government" to save the pound. But the pound could not be saved. Late in September an Act was passed abandoning the Gold Standard. The pound fell in value by a fifth, and all the countries who had confidently used London as their banker and conducted their trade in sterling found themselves forced off the gold standard as well. The old financial and trade arrangements of the world were in ruins.

The new British government succeeded in blaming the disaster wholly upon its predecessor, at the general election of 1931 the 'National' coalition gained 570 seats to Labour's 46, and although the grant size of the majority was diminished in 1935, the election introduced nine continuous years of rule by a small Conservative group. The name "national" was retained for electoral purposes, there being small parties called "National Liberal" or "National Labour", but the enormous majority was Conservative. The effective direction was



in the hands of a circle around first Stanley Baldwin and then Neville Chamberlain; Winston Churchill and his followers were excluded. French politicians were less fortunate: in 1936 a coalition of Radicals, Socialists and Communists called the "Popular Front" put the existing clique out of office.

The domestic policy of the United States was completely in the hands of a great empiricist. Neither Congress nor the people were disposed to oppose or even criticize any remedies that Franklin Delano Roosevelt proposed: he himself held no systematized philosophy and was deliberately trying one thing after another. So much did his hit-or-miss technique commend itself to his countrymen that despite furious opposition they would never desert him. First elected in 1932 and taking office in 1933 he was re-elected in 1936, 1940 and 1944; his reign (he is the only President to whom the word is appropriate) ended only with his death. His earliest devices included the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) to force up farm prices by reducing production and the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) which attempted to revive industry by persuading employers to observe "codes" raising wages, shortening hours, improving conditions and banning child labour. Both these Acts ran into difficulties, and the administration was more indignant than sorry when the Supreme Court in 1935 and 1936 declared them unconstitutional. Their objects seemed more likely to be achieved by a grand

and continuing scheme of public works, already started in 1933 and carried on under various names until the approach of war made it unnecessary. Far different from the road-mending which had previously been dignified with the title of public works, it included schemes for even actors and writers, and one achievement that awed all but the angriest critics—the Tennessee Valley Authority, which, setting out to control a destructive river, proved to be the greatest and most successful example of regional planning in a free country. Flood control was the least of its benefits—cheap and universal electricity, reforestation, the restoration of eroded land and the introduction of new industries completely changed what had once been a poverty-stricken and despairing area. Less universal approval was secured by the Wagner Act (1935) which forced American businessmen, till then the most autocratic in the world, to recognize and negotiate with the trade unions, who now began to exercise a stronger and stronger influence in politics.

Russia, based on a Socialist economy, did not receive the same shock as other states: no inexplicable queues of unemployed appeared, no factories were closed down while materials were abundant. But the Soviet Union was affected almost as seriously in other ways. Lenin had explicitly laid it down that the suspension of freedom during the revolution was to be temporary, and would be followed by a state freer than anything possible under a *bourgeois* order. But so far from increasing personal

liberties, the Soviet Union became politically more and more of a police state; from a turbulent and dictatorial democracy it was evolving into an oligarchy and seemed on the way to becoming an autocracy. There was great material progress which only the most biased observers could ignore. The Five Year Plan was very nearly completed in four years. Great power stations were erected—one very famous one on the Dnieper—oil wells sunk, steel-plants erected, and wholly new industrial centres created at Kuznetzk in Siberia, Magnitogorsk in the Urals, and elsewhere. Illiteracy, in this vast and most backward of countries, was partly destroyed; in the outlying and more barbarian parts of the Union the advances in civilization were sensational. But peasant proprietorship which was not permissible by Communist theory, was ended in 1929-31 in an unnecessarily brutal manner. All successful peasants were labelled "Kulaks", and were to be forced into collective farms or State farms. Many thousands were deported to Siberia; sabotage and resistance was widespread; it was stated that at one time half the livestock of Russia had been slaughtered.

The first Five Year Plan was succeeded in 1932 by the announcement of a second Plan, which was to concentrate upon housing, transport, the production of consumer goods and the raising of the standard of life of the people. In many ways it was successful, but it was accompanied by political changes that startled the outside world. Trotsky had been expelled

by an alliance between Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Stalin, the two first of these *triumvirs* found that they had handed themselves over to the power of the third Stalin, as secretary of the Communist Party, was the sole controller of political power, nor was he a man given to mercy Over 110 people had been put to death to avenge the murder of his friend Kirov in 1930 His colleagues found themselves first extruded from power, and then put on trial In 1936 fourteen of the most famous "comrades of Lenin", including Kamenev and Zinoviev, were charged with treason, and shot Another batch followed a few months later, next year Tukhachevsky and many others of the higher officers of the Red Army were executed Throughout the country these trials were paralleled by the execution or imprisonment of thousands of minor persons, until there was no one at all who opposed the policies of Stalin Mr Vishinsky, the chief prosecutor, secured 6,238 death sentences in open court The accused, without so far as is known one exception, produced confessions admitting exactly what they were charged with, even when these offences were very improbable By the end of the "purges" all the leaders of the 1917 revolution bar one were dead This one was on an eminence surrounded by younger men or men of the second rank, he now received an adoration very surprising to those who remembered the democratic traditions of the older socialism Lenin was dead before men dared rename a city after him, but the Russian map now was

spattered with Stalin, Stalino, Stalinsk, Stalin-grad, Stalinogorsk, Stalinabad and such like.

The profound political change inside Russia had effects outside its borders. In 1927 there were revolutionary Communist parties in almost every Parliamentary country; they had to be brought to heel. The annual meetings of the Communist International were suspended for six years to allow of this. Trotskysts were first driven out: the abandonment of "permanent revolution" in favour of "Socialism in one country" naturally made the defence of that one country—Russia—more important than revolutionary aspirations at home. What had been individual revolutionary parties became instruments of Russian foreign policy; year by year the leaders or followers who did not acquiesce in this change were expelled. At first the "party line" was to attack most venomously the Socialists and Liberals in democratic countries, describing them as "social-fascists" and even, as in a Berlin tram-strike, co-operating with the Nazis against them. The disastrous consequences of this policy to Russia became clear soon after 1933; and it was suddenly reversed in 1935, after the "Stalin-Laval pact". To this, an abortive alliance between Russia and France, was attached a formal approval of French rearmament; the French Communist party was required almost overnight to abandon its anti-militarism and anti-Imperialism. Soon this was translated into a universal policy of close co-operation with Socialists and Liberals, in what were

called "Popular Fronts" against Fascism. Considerable political successes were secured, especially in France, Spain and China. But the most permanent significance of the changes was that there were now in every Parliamentary country two Parties which were not indigenous groups, answerable to their fellow countrymen and shaping their policies by what they believed to be their country's needs, but representatives of an outside power. One set defended the interests of the Soviet Union, the other that of the Hitler-Mussolini alliance which now called itself the Axis. That the two could co-operate, however, seemed to everyone impossible.

—*H G Wells*

## THE RISE OF CAPITALISM

The Industrial Revolution is the term applied to the change which came over industry when mechanical appliances led to the factory system and the specialising of factory labour. There were rich men before that happened, but they belonged to the class of merchants and financiers rather than to that of manufacturers. And when the Industrial Revolution came, the manufacturer was not specially wealthy. He lived, as a rule, like a workman enjoying a substantial income. But wealth rapidly accumulated in his hands. He drew away, both in his social status and his ideals, from the people from whom he came. He formed a plutocratic class all by himself. The influence of the change was enormous. The aristocracy opened its doors to the new rich, for the aristocracy needed money. The exploiters of the virgin soil of America, its speculators, its financiers, supplied the incomes which our aristocracy required; our own rich families acquired titles. Nominally birth was retained as the hall mark of aristocracy, but wealth was in reality its foundation. Thus it has come about that the social effect of the Industrial Revolution has been the establishment of customs and distinctions which depend solely upon the possession of wealth, and which have led to the use of that wealth in selfish and anti-social directions. Wealth divorced from social responsibility, but held and used purely as

personal possession, has divided society into the two great separate kingdoms of rich and poor, each living its own life and very rarely coming into contact with the other. Slumming, charitable activities, patronising interferences, have taken the place of those personal relationships which used to exist between hut and hall before the feeling of social solidarity was destroyed by a huge factory and town population, the clearance of the people from the soil, and the class distinctions which became the chief desire of the plebeian rich. Thus public spirit and responsibility have become weakened, and we have less guarantee than ever that the control of wealth is to be other than purely selfish. Moreover, whilst the moral relationships between rich and poor have been weakening, the power of wealth has been increasing by leaps and bounds. This increase must be traced out, as it is an important link in the chain of socialist evolution.

Although the conflict between capital and labour began very early in our industrial history, and the employer never seems to have been unwilling to beat down wages to competitive levels, it was not till the eighteenth century had well advanced to its close that the two classes of capitalists and workmen became separated, that the journeyman began to become obsolete, and that the chance of a substantial proportion of the wage earners becoming employers in due time tended to disappear. Mechanical invention increased the amount of capital required in



business, the extension of the market intensified competition, and led to the organisation of a huge and a complicated system of exchange, factory-methods of work narrowed the skill and the outlook of the wage earners; thus the separation between the two economic classes became permanent and well defined. In the days of the hand-loom and the spinning-wheel there were poverty, child labour, and social distress, but the conditions under which they occurred were not so crushing, and they did not throw such a long and a black shadow across extended periods of life as they were destined to do later.

The history of this movement of the separation of economic classes, is, first of all, a history of the guilds. Originally a commercial union with religious sentiments and some political powers, the growing division of function between capital and labour destroyed the industrial catholicity of the first type of guild, the merchant guild, and raised opposition to it amongst the craftsmen. To begin with, the craftsmen won, but the gulf between the capitalist who had wealth, and the labourer who had only skill widened apace, and the guilds again drifted into position of economic privilege and antagonised the poorer workmen. The merchant guild had given place to the craft guild, qualification for membership in which consisted mainly in having served an apprenticeship to a craft or mystery. The function of the guild was to regulate the trade in the interest of the craftsmen. But all such

organisations have an evolution. They arise to satisfy a need, they succeed, they decay through a period of abuse. Thus it happened that the craft guild, too, became a close corporation, and its powers to regulate trade were used for the purpose of securing monopolies—a movement exactly parallel to that of modern capitalism, though the methods differ. For two centuries, ending about the middle of the sixteenth, the craft guild rose and sank. Outside it had grown up a new class of men who depended upon hire, who were not a craft aristocracy, who could neither amass money nor gather together stock, who had no land and who often worked with supplied capital. The guilds interfered with this class, not for the purpose of helping it, but of suppressing it. Entrance fees were raised against it. By the end of the fourteenth century, the journeymen, accepting their status as the final one which they were likely to experience, and, assuming that the crafts were barred against them, had formed some fraternities of their own. By the middle of the sixteenth century the guild had broken down, and legislation began to take the place of its statutes. But the landless and propertyless hired servant became common, and he in turn formed his guild in the shape of a trade union, when the factory system and the town system gave him a chance to do so, and the final separation of the labour and the capitalist classes compelled him to abandon the assumption that his industrial advancement was more likely than not. The employer had

moved into another social stratum, and "born a workman, die a workman" became the guiding thought of the labourer's life.

Up to the time of the Industrial Revolution the capitalist producing class was not a rich class. The industrial system was then domestic, and the craftsmen, as a rule, owned their own tools, just as a carpenter owns his kit to-day. The competition of the power-loom with the hand-loom in cotton manufacture was not severe up to 1812, and as late as 1834 there were only 733 power-loom workers to 7,000 or 8,000 hand-loom workers. In the woollen and linen industry power-looms were in little use before 1840. In spinning, mechanical power and factory conditions came somewhat earlier. In 1833 there were three spinning mills in Manchester, employing 1,400 hands each, eight employing from 500 to 900, eight from 300 to 500, and 17 from 100 to 300. Mr. Andrew, in his *Annals of Oldham*, tells of his uncle, who owned a carding engine in a factory (power was then let out to individual owners of engines something in the way that power is still let out to the owners of stands in Sheffield cutlery workshops) in 1809, and who created "a great hue and cry in the town" when he became the owner of a second.

Professor Marshall illustrates this point by comparing the relative value of tools and wages now and formerly. The textile operative used to employ tools equivalent in price to but a few months of his labour, whilst in modern times there is a capital in plant of about £200

for each man, woman and child in a textile factory. The cost of a steamship is equivalent to the price of the labour for ten years of those who work her, whilst the railway servants operate capital valued at perhaps twenty years of their wages. In 1845 M'Culloch estimated that the fixed capital in good cotton mills was no more than equal to two years' wages of an operative, Marshall's figures work out at five years' wages.

This brings us to a new stage.

The increase in the amount of capital used led to a revolution in the ownership of it. Industrial capital used to be owned by those who used it. The employer was the capitalist. But obviously one man cannot own the Midland Railway, or one of the huge modern engineering concerns like Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. So it has inevitably happened that the capital required for these huge undertakings is procured from a wide area of capitalists. Thus the limited liability, or joint stock, company arose to mark a further stage in capitalist evolution.

The constitution of these companies is quite familiar. Their capital is raised in the form of shares, it is controlled by a board of directors, generally by a managing director, and those who have provided it have practically no voice in the management of the business. Shareholders' meetings are held occasionally, but apart from the fact that many shareholders never attend these meetings, the power which the shareholder has does not amount to much.

more than to express gratitude or to grumble. Except at a crisis the directors, working within the bounds of the articles of association, hold an absolute authority.

Thus, one of the first results of the concentration of capital in industrial undertakings has been the supplanting of the individual and responsible capitalist by the official agent who represents many capitalists. The "captain of industry" is thus no more a man working with his own capital, but an agent working with other people's capital, and the capitalist himself is ceasing to be a business man and is becoming a mere financier. This change from personal to impersonal capitalism, from ownership control to agency control, is another important link in the chain of socialist evolution and argument.

One erroneous deduction from this change ought to be disposed of at once. It is often assumed that under a system of joint stock companies the dividends and profits previously made by a small class of industrial capitalists are spread over a wider field, and a better national distribution is thus secured. Elderly ladies with small savings get an income from building societies, clergymen eke out modest incomes derived from their calling by sharing in the profits of brewery companies and tied houses, clerks dabble in the gains of rubber companies, and so on. This, however, does not mean nearly so much as appears on the face of it. The list of shareholders in public companies is long, but the duplicates are enormous. No

thorough attempt has ever been made to eliminate these duplicates so that we may know what number of separate individuals have invested their money in these companies, but, judging from one's personal knowledge, the net number of investors must be very substantially smaller than the gross number. The shareholding financier in his turn becomes a class with a solid nucleus of great controlling magnates and a more or less unimportant fringe of comparatively poor people.

Moreover, it is clearly proved by every official and reliable publication that wealth continues to accumulate at one end of society, and that whilst the middle slowly improves, the other extreme is either stationary or is losing ground. Thus, on an average for the five years up to 1903-4 the net value of dutiable estates left at death was £276,000,000 and of these only 17,000 were of less value than £100. For the year 1909-10, the net value of these estates was £283,660,000 and the total of the 71 estates of a quarter of a million and over was not less than £59,160,000. Though it is true that over long periods the condition of the better class of artisan and the lower middle class improves, it is subject to considerable fluctuation owing to times of unemployment and bad trade, and to increases in the cost of living. To day, at the end of 1910, these middle social strata are not so well off as they were at the beginning of the century. There have been losses in wages and rises in prices in the interval, and rents continue to take more and more out of working-

class pockets. Relatively to the modern combinations of capital, combinations of labour tend to weaken, and the upward pressure which the workman can exert on his status is less effective than it was.

Nor must we forget that the joint stock company means that every industrial improvement is capitalised, and that, in consequence, the amount of capital borne by industry tends to keep pace with profits so that labour finds it increasingly difficult to secure an improving share in national wealth. Any successful limited liability company supplies an illustration of this argument. Let us suppose that a company is floated with a capital of £ 20,000, and that it pays a dividend of 10 per cent. Under the old system of the employing capitalist, a portion of this 10 per cent was available for increased wages. But under the public company system a shareholder sells his shares at perhaps double the price he paid for them. Thus, although the business has never absorbed more than a capital of £ 20,000, it is in reality carrying a burden of £ 40,000; nominally it is paying 10 per cent, it is actually paying its new shareholders only 5 per cent. The margins are immediately capitalised; profits are not available for improving the business itself, nor for increasing the wages of the employees; rapid capitalisation acts as a sponge and sucks up the life sap of the enterprise. This can be seen by the study of any handbook on public companies which gives the actual dividends paid on the current price of

stock. These figures work out at something about 4 per cent.

Over-capitalisation is the direct result of the joint stock phase of capitalist control. It has been estimated that the over-capitalisation of American railroads is from 50 to 200 per cent of their actual value. The Sugar Refining Company is capitalised at three or four times its actual value, the Felt Company at ten times, the Steel and Wire Company at three times, the Standard Oil Company at six times. Our own large companies are not quite so free to over capitalise themselves as those of America, owing to our Free Trade system, but our railways, our shipping combines, our large stores, some of our manufacturing trusts, are carrying far too heavy financial responsibilities, and the public suffer grievously in consequence.

Thus the weight of capital on industry becomes excessive the exploiting investor becomes all powerful and though the statistics of incomes may improve in appearance, as a matter of fact a system of distribution is being established which must ultimately produce impoverishment for every creative factor in national prosperity.

In this way the trust grows and another stage begins. Capital is carnivorous and preys upon itself. Competition is self destructive. A point is reached in the concentration of capital when war between rival firms entails such loss and such risk that peace is signed between them. They either define the limits of their activities, as a certain well-known thread



combine has divided the great markets of the world between its various sections, or they pool their profits or come to some other mutual arrangement regarding their disposal, or they amalgamate under one management like the American Steel Trust. They also proceed to control subsidiary industries—as the Steel Trust controls not only rolling mills and furnaces, but iron ore quarries and steamship and railway lines required for the transport of its material. So the grip of capital upon industry tightens, and the empire of finance widens.

We are sometimes told that along with this concentration there is also a growth of small businesses. But regarding this point, two observations have to be made. A great bulk of these businesses are casual. They are kept going by consumers who have special needs—little shops keeping open late, shops that give credit, shops that deal in special lines, small manufacturers who for some reason or other produce economically, or who are engaged in work that does not require much capital or that does not depend upon machinery, or that is artistic and, therefore, individual and not mechanical in its nature. The second observation is that the small capitalist, even though he may increase in numbers, diminishes in industrial importance. More and more absolute in trade and commerce becomes the rule of the large capitalist, the syndicate, the trust, the universal provider. He will never gather all trade unto himself. Indeed, one can foresee that with an improvement in taste and a

strengthening of individuality, machine production of articles of personal use will diminish rather than increase, but even then, the facilities for transport and the convenience of great central stores, like the modern Whiteley's will secure the survival of capitalist concentration in the distribution of these articles of taste, and a concentrated system of distribution will secure a concentrated system of production. For instance, the "artistic productions in cabinet making sold in some of our department stores are made in workshops which themselves are small, but which depend for their existence solely upon the patronage of these stores. The warehouse system in the boot and shoe trade is of the same nature. Hundreds of small manufacturers bring their products once, or oftener a week to these buying warehouses connected with thousands of centrally controlled shops open all over the country. The manufacturer remains a small man, he depends upon the warehouses for his existence, he is generally financed by them, his profits are often not more than wages, he is practically in the position of an employee, his profits are cut down by an operation of economic law which, in respect to him, is far less curbed and controlled than it is in respect to the ordinary factory workman who is a member of a trade union. The statistics of independent capitalists and employers must therefore be read with much reservation, or they will convey very false meanings.

—*J Ramsay MacDonald*

## THE PROBLEM OF EQUALITY

Equality has been proclaimed again and again in history as the necessary foundation of a democratic Society. Yet in most senses no one at all supposes that all men are equal. Men differ obviously and profoundly in almost every respect beyond the mere quality of being human beings. They are radically unlike in strength and physical prowess, in mental ability and creative quality, in both capacity and willingness to serve the community, and perhaps most radically of all in power of imagination. Of course, many of the existing inequalities between men are themselves the outcome of inequality—in early nature, in educational and cultural opportunity, and in sheer provision for physical needs. Inequality of treatment breeds inequality of powers, according to some men the fullest possible development of their faculties and starving others of the means of making their natural qualities effective.

It would, however, be absurd to contend that all inequality among men arises from these causes. Even if all men had equal opportunities, and were born of equally equipped parents, inequalities would persist, both because men would still be born different, and because from the very moment of birth they would be subject to the influence of differing chances and conditions. There will certainly never be a Society consisting of

equals, if this means a Society of men and women who are all equal in capacity to do and to serve

It follows that the advocates of political and social equality cannot be taken as meaning either that all men are, or that all can become, equal in these respects. Social equality means something essentially different from this. It means in effect that, unequal as men are in every possible respect—and all the more because they are unequal—human Societies ought to be organised on a basis that will both avoid as far as possible adding artificial to natural inequalities and recognise the right of each man to have his happiness and well-being considered equally with those of any other in the framing of social policy, subject only to the right of Society to restrict the rights and claims of the individual for the purpose of promoting the greatest happiness and well being of the greatest number

The principle has been invoked repeatedly by democrats of many different schools of thought. Most of all it has been proclaimed as the justification for treating all men as "equal before the law", and for the adoption of forms of government resting on the foundation of "one man, one vote". But in no Society as yet have the democrats, even in these respects, ever had matters all their own way. Only in a quite theoretical sense have all men ever been equal before the law, for, even apart from the fact that judges and magistrates cannot be wholly without bias in dealing with men of

different kinds, the clever man, or the man rich enough to have a clever advocate, is necessarily at an advantage against the stupid or the poor. And in politics, though there have been in many countries governing assemblies chosen practically by universal suffrage, these "popular" assemblies have never been the only governing bodies in the State, nor does universal suffrage work out to secure the reality of equal political rights if it is set in the frame-work of a Society based on other forms of social inequality.

The real roots of social inequality are mainly economic. It is simply not possible for men to be socially or politically equal as long as there exist among them differences of wealth and income so great as to divide them into distinct economic classes, with widely differing opportunities in childhood to become healthy, educated, travelled, and used to regard the world as a place made to suit their convenience. The slum child is not so healthy as the child whose parents can afford to give it the privileges of good food and sunlight. In the schools, the children of the poorest classes lag behind those who come from better equipped homes. Secondary education is still a privilege reserved for a minority selected mainly on economic grounds. And there is a wide difference, for the most part, between the few who are taught from childhood the arts of command, and the many whose lessons are intended to inculcate rather the duties of obedience and respect for their "betters",

Moreover, there is bound to exist a vast difference of social attitude between those who go through life in a prevailing atmosphere of comfortable economic security and those whose means of living are continually both scanty and insecure. Some among these last will indeed revolt against their condition, and become leaders of radical or revolutionary opinion, but revolt of this sort demands high qualities of personal courage, and far more of the "bottom dog" of Society will certainly lack both of courage and the ability to stand up against their difficulties, so as to make themselves the equals in power and effectiveness of those who have no similar troubles to face. The few who have both courage and ability will for the most part not remain at the bottom of the social scale. They will climb up to some sort of security, either as leaders of revolt or perhaps by hewing out for themselves a better position within the existing social system. But the less courageous and able will be left, as a mass of social "inferiors", to be played upon by rival emotional appeals from the groups higher up.

In these appeals, money counts. It counts more than ever, as the instruments of propaganda become more numerous and more expensive. The modern newspaper, relying upon advertisements for its revenue, is far more afraid of offending its advertisers than its readers, for the advertisers have both longer memories and longer purposes. It costs money to organise the huge electorate of a modern constituency, so that extension of the franchise

may even increase the power of the rich over the poor. Moreover, in a society based on economic inequality, nearly all the established social institutions are deeply impregnated with the ideas of the richer classes, which provide nearly all the leadership. In socially unequal Societies there is an immense weight of tradition on the side of inequality; and those who challenge this tradition come up against powerful obstacles in the minds even of those on whom the traditions press hard. For man is a conservative animal—conservative not only in his desires but also in his passive acceptance of the ills he knows.

These traditions, standing solidly in the way of real political equality, are closely bound up with the inequalities of wealth. For this inequality is, through its influence in selecting the children of the rich and poor for quite different treatment in the formative years of life, a tremendous force perpetuating social differences. Some Societies do indeed allow of movement from one class to another and from one standard of income to another far more easily than others; and this movement is usually least difficult in young and rapidly developing communities and hardest in old Societies and above all in those in which landed property is the principal kind of wealth. Capitalism, as against feudalism, is in this respect a leveller of established inequalities; but it levels them only to set up new differences in their stead. Young Capitalism permits easier movement from class to class; but it only makes class-divisions less

rigid, without making economic inequalities less extreme, and Capitalism growing old tends again to become ossified into class divisions arising out of the inheritance of wealth and status. It is no longer true, in settled capitalist countries, that it is but three generations "from clogs to clogs", and, to a startling extent, the children of skilled workers become skilled workers while the children of unskilled labourers join in their turn the ranks of the unskilled.

If we want a Society of social equals, we can hope to build it only on a foundation of economic equality. This is not to say that it is indispensable for all men and women, or all families, to have absolutely equal incomes, or incomes varying only with the size of the family. This may be desirable, in the long run, as the easiest way of solving the problem of distributing the national wealth, but it is not indispensable as the basis of democracy. It will suffice if there are no differences in wealth or income so large as to divide men into separate economic classes, with sharply contrasting standards of existence and habits of social life. For small differences of income among persons whose broad standards of living are the same will not confer on one great power over another, or interfere with their sufficient social equality in other respects as voters, or before the law, or in their everyday intercourse one with another. But as soon as economic equality exceeds this limit, good bye to the chance of real fraternity or of truly



democratic institutions. Good-bye in fact to the chance of a Society that will take for its essential aim the greatest happiness and well-being of the greatest number.

Even among the relatively poor, objection is often taken to economic equality, even in this modified form, on the ground that it is inconsistent with the principle of rewarding men according to the quality of their service. It is argued that, if this principle is abandoned or limited, there will be no adequate incentive left to make men give of their best. We are not raising the question whether or not Society will be able some day to dispense altogether with monetary incentives, by finding alternative incentives powerful enough to get the world's work done. But, quite apart from this, there is no evidence that, even if monetary incentives are required, they need be anything like so large as they are in most of the Societies of to-day. For the more equal incomes are, the smaller are the incentives needed to call out special effort. In an equalitarian Society, an extra penny may be as effective as a pound is now. Economic inequality bids up the price of effort, especially among the well-to-do, precisely because the more pounds a man has already the less an additional pound is worth to him.

Economic equality, in advanced industrial Societies, can come about only as an outcome of the social ownership of the resources of production. Private ownership of the resources means inequality; it is the foundation on which the major inequalities rest. Therefore,

if we want equality, we must socialise

We must do this, not only in order to get economic equality, but also in order to get social or political equality in any real sense. The pursuit of the greatest happiness and well-being of the greatest number is quite inconsistent with the treatment of the resources of production as the private property of a limited group of citizens. It implies their use as means of promoting the welfare of all. Political democracy cannot be real democracy unless it carries with it real control of the common means of life. For even if all men have votes, they cannot have an equal chance of using their votes aright unless they are tolerably on a level in standards of living, education and culture. When there are rich men and poor men, no merely political devices can prevent the rich from having more influence, man for man, than the poor. Nor can anything stop the rich, or most of them, from cohering together into a class for the preservation of their exclusive claims—from dominating the professions, the schools, the theatres, the newspapers, and from creating a socially stratified type of Society. Only collective control of the resources of production and of the distribution of incomes can prevent these things, which are the inevitable manifestations of a Society based on the recognition of unequal rights.

It is, of course, perfectly true that in any community some must lead, and others follow, that some must occupy the more responsible positions, and others work under orders at the

execution of jobs that are largely matters of routine. Nor is it less true that in any community some will be more cultured, imaginative and appreciative of the quality of living than others. But there is no reason why these necessary differences should divide men into social or economic classes. A clever man and a stupid man, a strong man and a weak man, do not belong to different classes by virtue of inequalities of these kinds. Let the Squire's son be a fool; he is nevertheless the Squire's son, and accounted a gentleman. In a Society based on economic equality there will be wise and foolish, saints and knaves, heroes and "poor fish"; but there will be no classes. Nor will there be any reason why the leader should have a bigger income than the lead, unless he has bigger needs, or continues to require a somewhat bigger financial incentive, at any rate for a time.

The idea that doing a more responsible job confers membership of a superior class is the outcome of two forces—the system of private ownership, which causes inequality to run like a thread through the entire texture of Society, and the survival of social concepts left over from an earlier phase, in which class distinctions were based on blood and heredity. Industrial Society puts the axe to the root of the old class difference; and it is able to make new ones in their image only because it recognises the claims of private property in the means of production, and so sanctifies the quest for wealth. In place of the old aristocracy

it puts plutocracy. But whereas shreds of the old aristocracy have survived the victory of the plutocrats, because aristocracy has *some* basis in good blood, nothing is left of plutocracy when its wealth is taken away. A Society without classes can emerge naturally and easily out of the process of socialisation.

A classless Society, however, does not mean a Society without leaders. It means rather one in which every citizen becomes for the first time eligible for leadership, if he has the power to lead. It means a Society in which everyone is given, as far as possible, the chance to develop this power, by the widest possible diffusion of educational opportunities in the broadest sense, and by keeping the career wide open to talents of every useful kind. It is often said that a community of equals will not allow itself to be led. But in fact most men are, in most things, very willing to be led, and more in danger of giving their leaders too much than too little authority, especially if they are free to choose them and assured that the leaders cannot exploit them for personal economic advantage. Leadership, so far from disappearing will come into its own in a truly democratic Society. But it is likely to be a more diffused leadership than we are used to, for a better nurtured people will have more citizens with strong wills and minds of their own wishful to lead, some in politics, some in industry, and some in the professions and in the arts of life.

This is the idea of a classless Society. Some will reject it as contrary to their interests, some

as Utopian and against "human nature". For there are some who deny, in deed if not in word, that the aim of Society should be to promote the greatest happiness and welfare of the greatest number, and others who hold, with pessimistic honesty, that most men must be driven and not led. Only with the pessimists need we be concerned to argue; and with them our difference, at bottom, is incapable of being resolved by argument. We say to them that human history has furnished again and again abundant proofs of the capacity of everyday people to rise to appeals transcending their immediate private interests, though often these appeals have only availed to lead them astray. Even the Nazis have risen to power by playing upon men's willingness to respond to leadership, and have owed part of their success to a specious summoning of their followers to sacrifice and an ideal of brotherhood. The Russians, to better purpose, have mobilised on the side of their vast experiment far less men's greed or hate than their will to strive and to serve. Class-inequality poisons the appeal to service, polluting it with racial hatred and nationalistic passion. Only a classless Society can make the simple appeal to all to join together in the common task of raising the entire standard of human living. To get political equality we must get equality in the economic sphere. To get economic equality we must get socialisation.

—G.D.H. and Margaret Cole

## PLANNING IN THE DEMOCRATIC STATE

In the first place, so far as the planning of a reconciliation of economic claims and counter-claims is the concern of the State (and we shall see presently that, though the State is always ultimately responsible, and must always act in the last resort, *all* issues of reconciliation need not come to the ultimate authority or be carried to the last resort), we have to remember that the State which plans the general scheme of reconciliation is something broader and greater than any particular planning committee and any particular advisory council which such a committee may employ. Parties, parliaments, and cabinets—acting in their hierarchy, and each respecting and supplementing the others—are the main and final planners on behalf of the general community. It may be desirable that a congested parliament should plan its own time better if it is to play its part properly in planning the life of the community. It may be desirable that a cabinet, harassed by the need of partaking in parliamentary debate and beset by the details of current administration at the same time that it is confronted by the problems of planning the future, should be aided in its embarrassments by planning committees and bodies of expert advisers. But we must not exaggerate these reforms and supplements to the detriment of the bodies themselves which are thus to be reformed or supplemented. Parliament and cabinet—

dealing with the plans furnished by political parties (or by political groups of men of good will not necessarily aligned in terms of party), and dealing with those plans under the general instructions and according to the general verdict of the electorate—remain the ultimate authorities. No authority can be substituted for them as long as the democratic form of State continues to exist. At the most, auxiliaries and adjuncts can be furnished to them; but it will depend on them to use those auxiliaries and adjuncts. This is inevitable and unavoidable; and the consequence is that only those adjuncts can be added to parliament and cabinet which agree with their own nature, and which they themselves will therefore agree to use.

In the second place, much of the adjustment of economic claims and counter-claims can be achieved, and should be achieved, at a stage which is prior to the action of the State. The State always stands in reserve to make the final adjustments which cannot be otherwise achieved but the world of economics is so far from being a passive world that it is fully competent, in its several spheres and departments to make adjustments, or to prepare plans for future adjustments, on its own account. In each industry, for example, there is nothing to prevent the institution, by the industry itself, of an organization which will co-ordinate and reconcile conflicts of claims between the different parties and interests engaged in the work of production—between the large concern

and the small, between the interest of large-scale production and low prices, and the interest of small-scale production and higher prices—and which will, in that sense, plan the production of the industry. Self planning and self-discipline are at least as integral to the economic system as State planning and State discipline. No doubt the State will be vitally concerned in a number of ways, with every scheme for self planning and self discipline in particular industries. It will be concerned, in the first place, with solving the conflicts of claims between different industries and with adjusting the different industrial plans to one another—though even here it is not impossible to imagine a general industrial organization, built on the several organizations of the several industries, and thus built by industry itself at large, which may do something to deal with such conflicts and to bring about such an adjustment. Again, and in the second place, the State will be concerned with each particular scheme of self-planning, in each particular industry, apart from its general interest in the general co ordination of all the particular schemes. Wherever there are initial difficulties, it will be concerned in stimulating and aiding the formation of an organization which can adjust and plan the production of the industry concerned. Whenever difficulties arise from recalcitrant parties or interests after the organization has been formed, it will be concerned in aiding the organization to overcome these difficulties by the grant of some measure of



compulsory power. In every case it will be concerned, and very particularly concerned, in ensuring that schemes of industrial self-planning are compatible with the reasonable claims both of the workers in the industry and of the consumers of its products. Self-planning will be in vain, and even untrue to its own name, if it is planning merely by grouped employers, and if it omits consideration of other claims and other interests (the claim of the worker to reasonable remuneration and a reasonable status, and the interests of the consumer in a reasonable price) which are also vitally engaged. But when all is said, the concern of State is less a concern in actual planning (that is to say, in the actual constructing and operating of plans) than in the constructive and operative criticism of planning. In the field of economics the State is the sovereign *critic*.

The argument, so far as it has gone, is, as an argument, limited to the field of industrial production. It absolves the State, in the main, from the primary duty of planning; but it charges it always with the duty of the criticism of plans. The same general argument may be applied to other fields of economic activity besides the field of industrial production. The general function of the State, not only in industry, but also in allied spheres (the sphere, for instance, of banking, or the general sphere of investment, with its various agencies), is the function of constructive and operative criticism. If the participation of the State

in planning thus consists (generally, or at any rate mainly) in the function of constructive criticism, there is obviously no gulf or incompatibility between democracy and planning. Democracy, whatever else it may fail to provide, can certainly provide criticism, and where democracy is working healthily the criticism will be constructive as well as critical. Again there is nothing alien to democracy in a system under which each industry first seeks to organize itself, and to deliberate and plan for itself, and then submits its deliberations and its plans to the verdict of the community. But if there is nothing here that is alien to democracy—if on the contrary there is a new opportunity for it—there is also a new demand upon it. It is true that all that is demanded is simply a criticism, a criticism at once sympathetic and impartial, of economic self-planning. But that is a large demand. To bring criticism of that order to bear on any plan involves a large equipment in the critic. To criticize a good plan constructively requires the presence of the idea and outline of a better. Otherwise the criticism will be merely negative, and such negative criticism may well diminish, instead of increasing, the good that is already there. To criticize an *economic* plan requires a grasp, at the very least, of the economic factors involved and their interactions with one another, and when the State is the critic, it has to remember, in addition, the political factors of which it is the trustee and the guardian.

It is on these grounds that we may desire to

see the democratic State armed with auxiliaries and adjuncts for the discharge of a function which, if in no way alien to its nature, makes fresh demands on its powers. We can see too, in the light of these considerations, that the auxiliaries and adjuncts needed may run into even greater detail than we have yet envisaged. The State which is to co-operate in planning, in any instructed way, may need not only a general planning committee and a general advisory economic council: it may also need particular bodies or committees to cope with the particular requirements of particular sets of plans—a committee on industry, for instance, to cope with plans for industrial reorganization; a similar committee on agriculture; a banking commission, or an Investment Board, to cope with plans for the organization of banking or investment; and other similar bodies and committees. If planning is afoot in various ways in the economic world, the State's co-operation in planning (generally critical, sometimes suggestive, and sometimes supplementary) must also be afoot in a number of different ways. But the fact remains, at the end in the sum of the account, that however important the co-operation of the State in planning may be, and whatever new activities (and new organs for those activities) it may demand from the State, it is always co-operation and never unilateral activity. It does not involve the conception and the bringing to birth, in a single creative effort, of a 'directed economy' which begins and ends with the State

alone. Planning, in the true and limited sense of the word, suggests a number of self-planning systems—each creative, all requiring the aid of the State, but none of them wholly manipulated or wholly directed by it. It is something multitudinous, a matter of many cells as well as of a single body, a business of joint co-operation, an affair of the economic system and its own self-discipline as well as of the political system and the general discipline involved in that system.

There is still a third and final consideration which applies to any economic organs which the State may create in connection with economic planning. It has already been argued that, whatever the economic organs which the State may create, and however valuable they may be, it is the State's political organs—beginning with party and electorate, and culminating in parliament and cabinet—which must bear, and cannot evade, the real and final responsibility. It has also been argued that this real and final responsibility is in the nature of operative and constructive criticism of plans, rather than of actual planning, that the political organs of the State, with their auxiliary and advisory economic organs, are thus engaged in a joint effort of collaboration with purely economic organizations, for the fusing of State criticism and supervision with plans prepared and proposed by those organizations, and that the State, far from being the sole planner or director, is therefore only concerned to stimulate,

superintend, and supplement self-planning and self-direction. The third and final argument, which is only a corollary of these previous arguments, turns on the relation of the general democratic method to *all* economic planning, whether it is done by State organs, or by purely economic organizations, or by the collaboration of both. The area of planning is not an area exempt from that method. Planning is not a franchise or immunity which lies outside the jurisdiction of free discussion and voluntary compromise. If the State adds to itself economic organs, it does so only in order to achieve a fuller and more informed discussion, and not in order to devolve upon them the burden of decision. If it encourages the leaders, directors, and experts in the various economic fields to do the work of self-planning, it does not remit that work to their unfettered discretion; it does not abdicate its own duty of criticism and supervision; nor does it release economic self-planning and self-government (however congenial they may seem to the general spirit of democracy) from their necessary immersion in the general and total flood of political self-government, moving with its whole 'pomp of waters', and 'moving altogether, if it move at all'. If we accept the basic idea of democracy, we have to believe that all economic planning must be compatible with the liberty of a general society of free minds. However scientifically plans may be elaborated in detail, and whatever the necessary part of the expert in such elaboration, the general

review of the whole structure—we may even say, the general planning of the whole structure—remains with the general society. This is the final and general court to which, in the last resort, all plans come, where they are discussed, compared, and composed, where they are fitted into a scheme and reduced to unity.

It is not easy, in these days, to detect the operation of this final and general court. We live in a time of economic dislocation. The old self-acting price mechanism, which adjusted production to consumption and supply to demand—which again, within the area of production, adjusted one producer to another in terms of their ability to satisfy the conditions which it imposed, giving success and life to those who could produce at an automatically determined price, and failure and extinction to those who could not—is either gone, or fundamentally disturbed. Active regulation, actively adjusting production to consumption, and producer to producer, seems to have taken its place. The problem is vast, and its very vastness leads to a further and different dislocation—the breaking up of the general problem into a number of apparently separate problems, imposed by the particular exigencies of each industry. The regulating authority becomes a series of fragmentary authorities, each occupied with its particular problem.

A further difficulty then arises. While these authorities appear to have a common purpose—the creation of an adjustment which no longer creates itself—they may really pursue very

different purposes. It is only a formal or abstract unity of purpose which is involved in the idea of the creation of an adjustment. The real nature of the regulation attempted depends not on the formal or abstract purpose of creating *some* adjustment, but on the substantial or concrete purpose of creating *this* or *that* adjustment. Now in any particular adjustment—any adjustment which is definitely *this*, or definitely *that*—there may enter some ulterior purpose, for which an opportunity is given by the fact of conscious regulation. A self-acting price-mechanism has no ulterior purpose: it can only produce its own automatic result. A regulating authority which takes the place of that mechanism may have, and will often tend to have, an ulterior purpose. It may seek to create an adjustment which serves an ulterior purpose of military defence or national self-sufficiency (the two may be much the same) or, again, the ulterior purposes which it envisages may be that of the redistribution of wealth, whether by the achievement of a greater measure of social justice, or by the establishment of complete socialism. In an authoritarian State (fascist or communist) one or other of these ulterior purposes will triumph. In a democratic State they co-exist and struggle together. Some of its members may desire a simple system of 'self-planning' in each industry, with no ulterior purpose, and with the only object of adjusting production to consumption and producer to producer. Others may desire a 'directed economy'; and of these some may

desire a direction (for instance, in agriculture) towards an ulterior purpose of national self-sufficiency, and others again a direction (for instance, in some industry supposed to be ripe for socialization) towards an ulterior purpose of the different distribution of wealth. At the same time, and in the same State, different desires will thus be urgent. Here, and in one area, there may be simply self-regulation by the organized producers of an industry, with the government criticizing and supervising their self-regulation. There, and in another area, where the government feels compelled to act more positively, there may be definite direction, and it is even possible that the same government, at the same time, may be using its power of direction in one field of this area towards a purpose of national self-sufficiency, and in another towards a purpose of a totally different character.

It would be foolish to deny the difficulties of our time. But it would also be foolish to demand too great a unity, or too much of a plan, in troubled times. Self-regulation and State direction can, after all, co-exist, according to the measure of the need, and while the one shades into the other, there is also a place for each separately. Even the different ulterior purposes are not so different as to be antinomies. military defence, national self-sufficiency and the redistribution of wealth may all be simultaneous aims, and though some one or other of these may be adopted as its characteristic and even exclusive aim by a



particular State, all States are concerned with them all. The fundamental question is one of proportion—the proportion between self-regulation and direction; the proportion again, so far as direction is attempted, between the different aims of direction. On the whole of our previous argument the democratic State is calculated to give the perspective that enables the different causes and claims to be seen and arranged in a due proportion. Democracy can provide the synoptic view and the scientific method which will do ultimate justice to all the factors involved.

It is true that causes and claims are now crowding rapidly on the vision of any democratic State. But temporary conditions (and on a long view the conditions, after all, *are* temporary) should not dictate a permanent pessimism about the competence of democracy. Nor, again, should the hustle of the time hurry us into the sort of planning, precocious and premature, which imposes the dead hand of the present on the life and growth of the future. It is necessary to plan for the future; it is also necessary to leave the future free to plan for itself. Tom Paine, arguing against Burk's idolization of the tradition of the past, contended that 'each present generation is competent to its own purposes.' There may also be an idolization of the competence of the present; and it is also necessary to contend that each future generation is competent to *its* own purposes. In the life of the States planning must always be piecemeal; or, at any rate, it

must always be fluid and continuous. What we do to day can never absolve the future from doing even more to-morrow, and we must never encroach by our planning on its right to plan for itself.

To argue for the rights of the future is not to argue for opportunism in the present. Past and present and future have each their own rights, and each present, just as it is conditioned (but not determined) by the past, must also condition (but not determine) the future. In each present we have to act as if everything hung on what we did, and as if we stood, as it were, in an eternal moment (the spring and nerve of our action would be gone if we had not that sense upon us), but while we must plan as if the moment were eternity, it does not follow that we must plan for eternity. There are many presents in the long life of the State: each demands a serious and considered reply to its demands, but each reply must be fresh and spontaneous. Planning is both a necessity and a danger. The danger emerges when those who plan have a general doctrine which they wish to carry to victory. Armed with that doctrine, they glide from planning for the present into dictating to the future, and not content with dictating to the future, and thus stopping development in the name of progress, they may also assume the character of dictators to the present, refusing to allow it to present itself and its problems as they actually are, and preferring to schematize it in a doctrinaire form of class interests and class war which

suits the scheme they wish to dictate to the future. There is a sense, after all, in which we may say that opportunism, as well as planning, is both a necessity and a danger. It is a danger if it means obliviousness of the future; for the future is always involved in any true calculation of the present. But it is also a necessity and indeed a virtue, when it signifies awareness of the actual present, as that present actually stands with its actual needs and demands, and not as it is imagined or schematized in the light of a general doctrine. Awareness of the present—the present linked with the past and issuing in the future, but still, when all is said, the present—is a fundamental necessity.

The continuous planning which is based, at each stage, on an awareness of the particular nature, and the unique demands, of each particular and unique present, may not only be continuous when it is viewed as a process: it may also be continuous when it is viewed in the light of the purpose which it carries and fulfils. Besides the explicit plans which we cherish and do our endeavour to fulfil, at each stage of the life of the State, there may also be an immanent plan which we are steadily realizing during all the vicissitudes of the series of particular endeavours; and this in spite of the fact that the different endeavours may seem, at the time, to be disconnected or even conflicting. To invoke the idea of an immanent plan running through a series of endeavours may seem an easy recourse to mere mysticism. Or again it may seem, at the best, to be an imposi-

tion of purpose—an external teleology, readily contrived by the would-be philosopher of history, who can look back after the event and invent an *ex post facto* process 'somehow making for righteousness' But there is a sense, nonetheless, in which it may be said that the process of development, which may be steadily traced through the succession of parties in office under a democratic system of government, proceeds on a plan towards a purpose—or, at any rate, proceeds 'as if' there had been a plan and a purpose The plan or programme of one party, confronted and modified, even while that party is in the enjoyment of office, by the plans and programmes of other parties, is succeeded by the plan or programme of another, similarly confronted and modified Under such conditions there is a general continuity, and that continuity is more than the progress of an uninterrupted stream It is also the progress of a stream which, inspite of diversions and windings, is flowing in one direction We cannot discover any definite body of persons which plans or purposes this unity of direction But the unity of direction is nonetheless there, and there is, in that sense, a plan The plan may not be consciously entertained But it is implied, and supplied, by the process from which it emerges, and it presents itself to our consciousness in retrospect, even if it was not originally present there The comings and goings of different parties in office can provide a result which, in review, is reasonable, which does justice to different sides and adjusts conflicting claims,

and which has thus the characteristics of purpose and of plan. We have to remember, after all, that there are two modes of planning. There is what may be called the short-time mode, when, in a given present, at a point of time, with our eyes on the immediate future, we discuss and plan the adjustments of which we can see, or forecast, the imminent necessity. But there is also the long-time mode, by which planning is spread along a line of time, and the discussion of different possible adjustments proceeds as it were by successive exposition, rather than by simultaneous debate, until the final adjustment is eventually attained. It is indolence and opportunism to relegate issues that require the short-time mode to the region of the long-time. On the other hand, it is an impatient and short-sighted policy which would impose the short-time mode on matters which require the long-time. There is room for both; and statesmanship consists in a true distinction of issues according to the modes they require. Perhaps we need to-day a great deal of short-time planning. The more we have the better—provided that it is restricted to its own proper issues; that we recognize that the long-time mode of planning is also, in its way, planning; and that we reserve for that mode the great issues which demand its operation.

—*Ernest Barker*

## PRODUCTION, THE FIRST ESSENTIAL

Dr Mookerjee, friends and comrades, I venture to address you in this way, more especially on this occasion, because probably no other major problem that we have to tackle requires so much the spirit of friendly co-operation than Industry, Labour and the general economic set-up of this country. It is rather presumptuous for me to come here at this almost last stage of the Conference and the Committees that you have had during the last few days, not having taken part in them, and now presumably in order to offer you good advice. Many of you are experts in your fields, whether it is Labour or Industry and though I am very greatly interested in all these matters, and perhaps sometimes have an advantage over the experts in the sense that a layman can see the whole picture in proper perspective more than a specialist in his special field of activity, nevertheless, I would have liked to have had the chance and opportunity of taking part in your discussions during the last few days, and knowing more how the mind of this gathering, of those who are participating in these discussions, was working.

It is obvious that in these very vital matters there are differences of opinion—vital difference of opinion and approach. There are what are called ideologies, there is what is called the practical approach which, I have often found, is far removed from anything that might

really be called practical or that can be practical. A practical approach need not necessarily be just looking one yard ahead of you, it requires looking further ahead also. Well, there are these differences and it would be a little absurd to think that you can charm away those differences and find complete unanimity by just pure good-will and good advice. Nevertheless, I think, without doing away with those differences of approach, if we do appreciate that in a certain context of events it is necessary and highly desirable to function together, well, we create an atmosphere which helps in coming to some—if you like, not permanent, at any rate semi-permanent or temporary—conclusions.

Now, why are these approaches different? I suppose, partly because of some difference in one's outlook on life itself, on the objectives of life, on the social set-up, and the rest, but to put it very crudely, leaving out these wider objectives, the differences arise because various groups aim at getting some prize or other, some benefit or other. Capital may want a certain prize, Labour may want a certain prize; the consumer, the producer, everybody naturally wants to benefit himself or his group.

But a time comes when it may well happen that while the conflicting groups are fighting against each other, the prize vanishes and there is no prize left for anybody. So it becomes important at that time to moderate one's own ardour or one's own particular desire to win the prize, and save the prize itself. It is not

necessary to give up the hope of getting the prize, but rather to put first things first, that is, to preserve the prize and then either in a friendly way come to future decisions or, if you like, have a conflict, but when the conflict endangers the prize itself, then obviously this is an exceedingly unfortunate and foolish way of approaching a thing

You all know that India for the last few months has passed through all manner of tremendous crises and we have had to face colossal problems, we have survived all manner of surgical operations of a major kind, and we are not likely to have another operation of that type, but the consequences of that operation have been so tremendous that few of us realized previously that they would be so bad. We knew they would be bad, therefore, we resisted the operation and resisted what might be called quack remedies. But unfortunately sometimes quacks succeed, even in the best regulated households. And the result is that we have had operations and you have seen what a tremendously upsetting consequence followed them. We have not yet overcome that consequence and we have to face problems of colossal magnitude still.

While we have had to face this, on the other hand, we see and we have seen a progressively deteriorating economic situation. We talk, and rightly so, of the problems of distribution. In fact, most of our troubles and conflicts and vital ideologies are concerned with distribution. But important as that is,



there must obviously be something substantial to distribute before we can start the process of distribution. Therefore, we come to the problem of production. Production becomes the first essential, but with it is intimately associated distribution. You cannot really separate the two. Production depends on many factors and one of the most important of those factors is the psychology for production, apart from the technical apparatus that we may have, one should have efficiency and there must be the capacity and the psychology to produce. If that psychology is lacking, then inevitably production goes down as it has gone down.

Now, you can analyze the past few months or few years as you like; there are so many factors. There are the consequences of the war—a certain feeling of tiredness after hard work. There are the consequences of political upsets, of the partition, of communal troubles and the like. But I should say, perhaps, one of the major things we have to face in industrial relations is this psychological background, which makes Labour feel that it does not get a square deal, that somehow it is overreached all the time, which makes the employer class feel that they are threatened with all manner of dangers, and that Labour is not pulling its weight and is only threatening strikes and slowing up work and so on and so forth. So they approach each other not only with a complete lack of confidence but in a spirit of extreme hostility.

How are we to get over this? On the one hand, I think it is perfectly true to say that there has

been a tendency on the part of Labour or certain Labour groups to take advantage of certain difficulties which the nation has had to face, to organize strikes and stoppages of work and slowing down of work at a time when it meant hitting rather hard the nation. If that kind of thing continues with Labour—which undoubtedly has the sympathy of vast numbers of people in this country—a certain barrier begins to grow up between the large labour element and the rest of the country. And it is not good to have that kind of barrier grow up.

That is so far as Labour is concerned. As far as the employers' side is concerned, I hope no one will challenge me when I say that during this last war a certain section of the employer class did not behave well, in fact, they behaved exceedingly badly, exceedingly egotistically and far from giving a square deal to anybody, they thought mostly of themselves and of little else. I have yet to understand how, in spite of the tremendous and heavy taxation in India, these vast fortunes were made by certain individuals or groups, I just cannot understand it, and we have to find some means and machinery to prevent this kind of shameful traffic in human beings and profiting at the expense of the nation.

So it is easy to find fault with certain sections of Labour or certain sections of the employing class. But what we have to do is not merely to find fault but to seek a remedy. You cannot turn everybody into angels, there would be no problem if people were advanced enough

to think and act in that way. One remedy is to create conditions in which—if I may say so—those who are not angelic do not find it easy to flourish and find difficulties in their way. That is, you have to provide inducements to fair dealing and honesty and certain disadvantages should be attached to any other course of action.

Leaving out the people who may not be up to the right standard in fair dealing and honesty, the real difficulty comes when honest people are in conflict. If they are completely honest, they hold different views and they come into conflict. Normally, people who are not honest sometimes make up their differences sooner, because they have nothing strong to hold on to. They are not used to any anchorage, they just float about, and so, under pressure of events, they come to terms. But honest people who hold opinions very stoutly do not come to terms, because they think that any other way is the wrong way. Now, I take it that most of us who are here are honest people and people who have thought about these matters and hold strong opinion about these matters and, therefore, find it a little difficult to accept the other person's view.

Nevertheless, the major fact confronts us: that all manner of perils face us in India today. And although some for the moment are at the forefront, the ultimate peril is the slow drying-up of the capacity of the nation to produce. That affects us politically, economically and in every other way, and gradually our strength

goes down to resist these very perils that face us. Therefore, you have to stop this drying-up of our productive capacity.

I believe you have been thinking about this and you have also passed a number of Resolutions on the subject. We must increase our production, we must increase our national wealth and the national dividend and only then can we really raise the standard of living of our people.

We may here and there make some adjustment by a more equitable distribution of the existing wealth. That must be done really not so much because it makes too much of a difference in raising the standard of life—it does, but not very much—but it must be done because it creates conditions for advance, because, if that is not done, there is continually that feeling of not having a square deal and people do not put their heart and soul into the work they do, thinking that they are not being properly treated, and so on. Therefore, it becomes essential first of all to see that where there are gross inequalities present, we work for a rapid reduction of those inequalities. But ultimately more wealth can only come from more production of all types and kinds of goods.

Presumably, many of you here represent big industry and I have no doubt that production through big industry is essential. But in the present context of events today—I should like to say that when we talk of increased production, whether of food or of any other commodity—it

is necessary for us to encourage small-scale production in a large way also. This question is often considered as if there were an inherent conflict between large-scale production and small-scale production. Perhaps, it might indicate a different approach. But, leaving that idea of conflict aside, it seems to me obvious that, at the present moment more especially, and possibly later, the two have to go on at the same time. And especially as a short-term plan, there must be large-scale small production today of all manner of things that can be produced in a small way, because all kinds of commodities are lacking. But we are really concerned at the present moment with bringing about a psychological atmosphere and bringing about some kind of machinery wherewith to tackle any conflict that may arise.

Now, if we are facing some perils along with the rest of the world, with some special troubles of our own, how are we to proceed? The very first thought that comes to one's mind is that in this dissolving world which is heading again for a big-scale conflict, the sooner we put India on its feet the more chance there is of our pulling our weight and surviving and having some influence in the near future. None, not even the very biggest expert, can say how long this very precarious peace in the world will last. We hope it will last many years, but it may break at any time. And if that happens, you will realize that all manner of unforeseen things will take place. It will shake us up more than anything else has yet done.

And how should we face that emergency ? By building up, before anything happens, an economically strong and well-balanced India with a strong enough defence apparatus. And remember what the defence apparatus means today. People talk of the army and navy and air force, obviously, defence means these. But far more than the army and navy and air force, defence means industry and production, not all the soldiers in the world will be of any good to India otherwise. People talk about compulsory military service. From one point of view, I am not in favour, generally speaking, of compulsory military service. But I am in favour of it in this sense, that it will make our people a little more disciplined, and also from the point of view of physical culture.

But this business of compulsory military service means nothing important from the point of view of defence, because the real problem is not to make people war-minded but to give them the means of fighting. If you have millions and millions of men walking about with antique weapons and lathis, it is not much good. You have to have the production of all the essentials of warfare. In fact, in war weapons and all manner of things are necessary. If you are industrially strong, you can build up your army and navy and air force at short notice. If you depend on buying your warships and everything else in a foreign country and that source dries up, it is quite useless to have only a few thousand men shouting about war. So that, in the ultimate analysis, even this war business brings you

back to production and the growth of industries, small and big.

Many things contributed to the winning of the last war, but I think the final reasons were two, the amazing capacity of American industry and scientific research. It is these which won the war, not so much the soldiers and others. Therefore, we must, from every point of view—external and internal—stop this slowing down of production and increase it rapidly by building up new industries; and also tackle problems of unemployment and of raising the standard of living. These can only be done if there is peace in industry; without peace there, it simply cannot be done. And I take it that the object of this Conference is to have peace in industry for a certain period at least, which will give us a breathing space.

In a draft Resolution that I have been reading, a period of three years is mentioned. I am not interested in any particular period, and for some time past my mind has hardly functioned in terms of long-distance objectives except in an idealistic kind of way. I can make no plan for myself, a few days or a few weeks ahead, I do not know where I shall be. So I am not very much interested whether it is two years or three years.

The point is that it would be a tremendous thing for India, if all of you and all those whom you represent came to the conclusion that you should give a chance to this and have a period of truce during which there would be no strikes and no lock-outs. And how can you do

that? Of course, it is too much to expect this to be done unless there is some machinery and apparatus to settle disputes to the satisfaction of the people concerned, or more or less to their satisfaction, because there cannot obviously be hundred per cent satisfaction when two parties are in dispute. I suppose it is not beyond the wit of man or even beyond the wit of this Government to produce some such machinery or scheme. Whenever there are such schemes, it is curious that objection is taken to them on both sides.

The other day I was in Calcutta and the President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce there went on repeating and telling the audience that the Government should not interfere or intervene in any way. He thought that if the Government stood aloof, industry would flourish. It was very interesting for me to hear that, because I had thought that that particular viewpoint had almost vanished from the earth. But still it exists in Calcutta. At any rate, the labour people want governmental interference right enough. But when you talk of arbitration and adjudication, their idea of arbitration and adjudication often is that they should go in for them, if they succeed, well and good, otherwise they are free to do what they like. That I can understand psychologically. It is a relic of old times, but practically speaking, it becomes impossible to have arbitration and adjudication if you approach it in that spirit. So, if we can, as I think we can, have a proper impartial machinery—which machi-



nery in the modern world is bound to incline towards Labour rather than towards the others—we can resolve these difficulties or such difficulties as may arise from time to time.

I am not for the moment talking about the final resolution as to the future economic policy and the merits or otherwise of nationalization, although inevitably they arise. For the present, I think the first step should be a kind of adjustment of minor differences while we are considering major objectives of policy. With regard to the major objectives of policy, I have just said something in Calcutta and elsewhere and I will not repeat it here.

Speaking as a person who is a believer in the socialization of industry, I should like to say this, that far too much attention is often paid to acquiring existing industries than to the building of new industries by the State or under State control. In many cases, existing industries of the basic type may have to be acquired by the State and run by the State. But it seems to me a far better approach to the problem for the State to concentrate more and more on new industries of the latest type and to control them in a large measure, because then the resources of the State go towards further progress and controlled progress instead of merely trying to get hold of something which exists. Of course, one sometimes has to do that too.

I say this because I am to some extent—if I may venture to say so—of a scientific bent of mind and I try to think more in dynamic terms

than in static terms. The existing industry today that most people think of—capitalists, socialists or communists—is something of which they think in static terms, as if the thing must go on and on, while as a matter of fact the thing is completely out of date and most of it should be scrapped.

If you think in a somewhat dynamic way, you can see that we are at one of the major ages of transition when completely new sources of power are being tapped, something of the nature of the industrial revolution or electrical revolution, but something even more far-reaching. If somebody at the time of the industrial revolution was thinking in terms of the pre-industrial age and talking about acquiring this or that, he would have been completely out of the picture sometime later when the new age came and there were new sources of power. In the same way, we are on the verge of a new industrial age and whether it takes ten, fifteen or twenty years—I doubt it will take more than that—many of our methods of production will become completely out of date, and what you are thinking of acquiring today may have no value at all. That is a warning. I hope it does not frighten people and make them think that they should not invest money in any industry. But one has to be very wide awake today about these changes and one must think in terms of the future rather than the past, because the past is dead and gone, we cannot go back to it, and even the present is a rapidly changing present. If you approach it in terms of the future, then

many of the present conflicts seem out of place : or, at any rate, they assume a new aspect and you get out of the rut of your old mode of thinking.

These are some considerations for us to ponder over. But for the present I do hope that you, who represent great forces in the country—industrial, labour and governmental—will come to an agreement on the period of peace and reconstruction and building up, and meanwhile we shall think of the larger policies for industrial and economic development and give effect to them fairly rapidly. For my part, I attach probably more importance to the development of our big schemes—river valley schemes—than to anything else. I think it is out of those that new wealth is going to flow into this country. When I see a map of India and I look at the Himalayan range—I like the Himalayas myself; I like mountains and all that—I think of the vast power concentrated there which is not being used, and which could be used, and which really could transform the whole of India with exceeding rapidity if it were properly utilized. It is an amazing source of power, probably the biggest source anywhere in the world—this Himalayan range, with its rivers, minerals and other resources. Therefore, I attach more importance to the development of these big river valley schemes, dams, reservoirs, hydro-electric and thermal power and so forth, which, once released, will simply drive you forward. But before we release power, we have to know how to control it and

use it in the proper way

We have been in some way or other connected with this Government for the last sixteen months or so. One of the first things that I did when we came to this Government was to think of these *economic plans* and these various schemes, and we appointed an Advisory Planning Board for a rapid survey—not a detailed survey—of these schemes so that we might consider some basic policies. The Planning Board reported fairly soon. It worked necessarily with some superficiality, but nevertheless it did well, and then immediately we got caught up in the business of the approaching partition. After partition again, we got caught up with the business of the after effects of partition. So all these vital problems could not be solved. There they remained.

But part of the difficulty has also been the wrong psychology in the industrial field. So if we start at this end, governmentally, I hope, we shall approach this problem fairly soon, and I hope also that this procedure which my colleague, Dr. Mookerjee, has initiated—that is, to confer with the representatives of all shades of opinion—will be adopted whenever necessary in the future policy. But in order to approach that properly, one has to have a breathing space. One cannot have it in this world with trouble all over the place. But let us have it in industry.

I do not ask you to give up any of your particular ideologies and beliefs. Stick to them. But just realize that even your particular

ideology may have a greater chance of advancement if we have peace and build up something now for the next year or two, and meanwhile we develop those other policies; and if you want a fight, let us have a fight afterwards, but at any rate let us have something worth fighting for, otherwise the thing we fight for vanishes and that is not good enough or wise enough.

I heard last night—I have not myself seen it in a newspaper—that in Bombay an announcement has been made that there will be what is called a token one-day strike against the adjudication machinery and decontrol. I will not go into these two matters here. But it seems to me quite astoundingly irresponsible for any organization, whatever its views and ideologies, to indulge in strikes at this moment and in this way, even though they may be token one-day strikes. It shows a complete lack of understanding of the political situation, of the international situation, of the national situation, of the economic situation, of the human situation, or for that matter of any situation. I should not like to criticize any people without discussing the matter with them, but I confess that it passes my understanding how any responsible person can indulge in this kind of token strike at a moment when there is always the possibility of its giving rise to even bigger problems and bigger conflicts, when all of us here and all over the country are thinking in terms of finding some way out of this impasse, even though it may be a temporary way out.

So just at this moment to indulge in this kind of token strike seems to me to be very unfair and very unfortunate

Now, the strike, as I have just learnt, is against compulsory adjudication and decontrol. Opinions may differ about these matters, but so far as decontrol is concerned, we have announced a policy which is very cautious. The subject of control is of exceeding complexity and difficulty and opinions differ. The decision that the Government has arrived at has been taken after the most careful thought. And even so we have taken care to see that if anything tends to go wrong, we go back, or we reconsider our position. The whole machinery of control is being kept even where control is being withdrawn. Now, whether we are right or wrong is another matter. We may be wrong, but the only way to proceed in such matters is to be always ready to correct an error as soon as one is convinced that it is an error. We are ready for it, but the point I wish to put before you is this. This Government is supposed to be a popular government and to represent the wishes of a large majority of the people. If that is so and if that Government takes any measure like this how do those who oppose that measure proceed? Either they are in a majority or in a minority. If they are in the majority, it is very easy for them to put an end to that Government. If they are in a minority, any action that they may want to take means that a minority is trying to coerce the majority and that inevitably leads—it may of course lead to

a temporary success for the minority—to the majority getting angry and setting on the minority.

After all, if you start a conflict, two can play at the same game of trying to coerce the other part of the community. Or even from the narrowest point of view of a group, this business is unwise and does not pay; but it does a lot of harm to the community. I hope, therefore, that this type of token strikes—though the strikers may be justified in expressing their wishes in any way they like, such as meetings and peaceful demonstrations, and show that they disapprove of decontrol and adjudication—is not followed because not only does it mean the loss of production for that day, but it may mean petty conflicts. If someone does not go on strike then you pull him out and then there is trouble. Then someone is arrested by the police and immediately a vicious circle starts.

I would beg those who think in this way to reconsider their decisions and try to think in a larger way, or if I may say so, in a more rational way, and consider the consequences of their actions. It may be that many of these things that occur happen because of some cause which does not appear on the surface. For instance, some kind of election may be pending and people think that if they behave in a particular way they may have a pull at the elections—municipal, corporation or provincial.

Ultimately, it becomes a question for all of us to consider whether we are to think in terms of some petty elections or some permanent and

larger interest. Of course, if we are interested in the former, in the small things, then it is not good talking about bigger things, they will escape us. I am sure there is quite enough determination and sense in this country to get over these petty difficulties and to face the larger issues. Therefore, to come back, I hope that this Conference will yield this very substantial result, namely, that we shall start in a friendly way, we shall decide on some kind of truce in industry for a period, and we shall devise means to see that everybody gets a square deal as far as possible, and meanwhile, we shall sit down and think about our larger policies.

—*Jawaharlal Nehru*



## IS SCIENCE SUPERSTITIOUS ?

Modern life is built on science in two respects. On the one hand, we all depend upon scientific inventions and discoveries for our daily bread and for our comforts and amusements. On the other hand, certain habits of mind, connected with scientific outlook, have spread gradually during the past three centuries from a few men of genius to large sections of the population. These two operations of science are bound up together when we consider sufficiently long periods, but either might exist without the other for several centuries. Until near the end of the eighteenth century the scientific habit of mind did not greatly affect daily life, since it had not led to the great inventions that revolutionized industrial technique. On the other hand, the manner of life produced by science can be taken over by populations which have only certain practical rudiments of scientific knowledge; such populations can make and utilize machines invented elsewhere, and can even make minor improvements in them. If the collective intelligence of mankind were to degenerate, the kind of technique and daily life which science has produced would nevertheless survive, in all probability, for many generations, but it would not survive for ever, because, if seriously disturbed by a cataclysm, it could not be reconstructed.

The scientific outlook, therefore, is a matter of importance to mankind, either for good or

evil But the scientific outlook itself is twofold, like the artistic outlook The creator and the appreciator are different people and require quite different habits of mind The scientific creator, like every other, is apt to be inspired by passions to which he gives an intellectualist expression amounting to an undemonstrated faith, without which he would probably achieve little The appreciator does not need this kind of faith, he can see things in proportion and make necessary reservations, and may regard the creator as a crude and barbaric person in comparison with himself As civilization becomes more diffused and more traditional, there is a tendency for the habits of mind of the appreciator to conquer those who might be creators, with the result that the civilization in question becomes Byzantine and retrospective Something of this sort seems to be beginning to happen in science The simple faith which upheld the pioneers is decaying at the centre Outlying nations, such as the Russians, the Japanese, and the Young Chinese, still welcome science with seventeenth century fervour, so do the bulk of the populations of Western nations But the high priests begin to weary of the worship to which they are officially dedicated The pious young Luther revered a free thinking Pope, who allowed even to be sacrificed to Jupiter on the Capitol to promote his recovery from illness So in our day those remote from centres of culture have a reverence for science which its augurs no longer feel The

“scientific” materialism of the Bolsheviki, like early German Protestantism, is an attempt to preserve the old piety in a form which both friends and foes believe to be new. But their fiery belief in the verbal inspiration of Newton has only accelerated the spread of scientific scepticism among the “bourgeois” scientists of the West. Science, as an activity recognized and encouraged by the State, has become politically conservative, except where, as in Tennessee, the State has remained pre-scientific. The fundamental faith of most men of science in the present day is not in the importance of preserving the *status quo*. Consequently they are very willing to claim for science no more than its due, and to concede much of the claims of other conservative forces, such as religion.

They are faced, however, with a great difficulty. While the men of science are in the main conservative, science is still the chief agent of rapid change in the world. The emotions produced by the change in Asia, in Africa, and among the industrial populations of Europe are often displeasing to those who have a conservative outlook. Hence arises a hesitation as to the value of science which has contributed to the scepticism of the High Priests. If it stood alone, it might be unimportant. But it is reinforced by genuine intellectual difficulties which, if they prove insuperable, are likely to bring the era of scientific discovery to a close. I do not mean that this will happen suddenly. Russia and Asia may continue for another century to entertain the scientific faith which

the West is losing. But sooner or later, if the logical case against this faith is irrefutable, it will convince men who, for whatever reason, may be momentarily weary, and, once convinced, they will find it impossible to recapture the old glad confidence. The case against the scientific *credo* deserves, therefore, to be examined with all care.

When I speak of the scientific *credo*, I am not speaking merely of what is logically implied in the view that, in the main, science is true, I am speaking of something more enthusiastic and less rational—namely, the system of beliefs and emotions which lead a man to become a great scientific discoverer. The question is: Can such beliefs and emotions survive among men who have the intellectual powers without which scientific discovery is impossible?

Two very interesting recent books will help us to see the nature of the problem. The books I mean are Burt's *Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science* (1924) and Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* (1926). Each of these criticizes the system of ideas which the modern world owes to Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton—the former almost wholly from an historical standpoint, the latter both historically and logically. Dr Whitehead's book is the more important, because it is not merely critical, but constructive and aims at supplying an intellectually satisfying basis for future science, which is to be at the same time emotionally satisfying to the extra scientific aspirations of mankind. I cannot accept the

logical arguments advanced by Dr. Whitehead in favour of what may be called the pleasant parts of his theory: while admitting the need of an intellectual reconstruction of scientific concepts, I incline to the view that the new concepts will be just as disagreeable to our non-intellectual emotions as the old ones, and will therefore be accepted only by those who have a strong emotional bias in favour of science. But let us see what the argument is.

There is, to begin with, the historical aspect. "There can be no living science," says Dr. Whitehead, "unless there is a widespread instinctive conviction in the existence of an *order of things*, and, in particular, of an *order of Nature*." Science could only have been created by men who already had this belief, and therefore the original sources of the belief must have been pre-scientific. Other elements also went to make up the complex mentality required for the rise of science. The Greek view of life, he maintains, was predominantly dramatic, and therefore tended to emphasize the end rather than the beginning: this was a drawback from the point of view of science. On the other hand, Greek tragedy contributed the idea of Fate, which facilitated the view that events are rendered necessary by natural laws. "Fate in Greek Tragedy becomes the order of Nature in modern thought." The necessitarian view was reinforced by Roman law. The Roman Government, unlike the Oriental despot, acted (in theory at least) not arbitrarily, but in accordance with rules previously laid down. Similarly,

Christianity conceived God as acting in accordance with laws, though they were laws which God Himself had made. All this facilitated the rise of the conception of Natural Law, which is one essential ingredient in scientific mentality.

The non scientific beliefs which inspired the work of sixteenth—and seventeenth—century pioneers are admirably set forth by Dr Burt, with the aid of many little-known original sources. It appears, for example, that Kepler's inspiration was, in part, a sort of Zoroastrian sun worship which he adopted at a critical period of his youth. "It was primarily by such considerations as the deification of the sun and its proper placing at the centre of the universe that Kepler in the years of his adolescent fervour and warm imagination was induced to accept the new system." Throughout the Renaissance there is a certain hostility to Christianity, based primarily upon admiration for Pagan antiquity, it did not dare to express itself openly as a rule, but led, for example, to a revival of astrology which the Church condemned as involving physical determinism. The revolt against Christianity was associated with superstition quite as much as with science—sometimes, as in Kepler's case, with both in intimate union.

But there is another ingredient, equally essential, but absent in the Middle Ages, and not common in antiquity—namely, an interest in "irreducible and stubborn facts." Curiosity about facts is found before the Renaissance in individuals—for example, the Emperor Frede-

rick II and Roger Bacon; but at the Renaissance it suddenly becomes common among intelligent people. In Montaigne one finds it without the interest in National Law; consequently Montaigne was not a man of science. A peculiar blend of general and particular interest is involved in the pursuit of science; the particular is studied in the hope that it may throw light upon the general. In the Middle Ages it was thought that, theoretically, the particular could be deduced from general principles; in the Renaissance these general principles fell into disrepute, and the passion for historical antiquity produced a strong interest in particular occurrences. This interest, operating upon minds trained by the Greek, Roman, and scholastic traditions, produced at last the mental atmosphere which made Kepler and Galileo possible. But naturally something of this atmosphere surrounds their work, and has travelled with it down to their present-day successors. "Science has never shaken off its origin in the historical revolt of the later Renaissance. It has remained predominantly an anti-rationalistic movement, based upon a naive faith. What reasoning it has wanted has been borrowed from mathematics, which is a surviving relic of Greek rationalism, following the deductive method. Science repudiates philosophy. In other words, it has never cared to justify its faith or to explain its meaning, and has remained blandly indifferent to its refutation by Hume."

Can science survive when we separate it

from the superstitions which nourished its infancy ? The indifference of science to philosophy has been due, of course, to its amazing success, it has increased the sense of human power, and has therefore been on the whole agreeable, inspite of its occasional conflicts with theological orthodoxy. But in quite recent times science has been driven by its own problems to take an interest in philosophy. This is especially true of the theory of relativity, with its merging of space and time into the single space-time order of events. But it is true also of the theory of quanta, with its apparent need of discontinuous motion. Also, in another sphere, physiology and bio-chemistry are making inroads on psychology which threaten philosophy in a vital spot, Dr Watson's Behaviourism is the spear-head of this attack, which, while it involves the opposite of respect for philosophic tradition, nevertheless necessarily rests upon a new philosophy of its own. For such reasons science and philosophy can no longer preserve an armed neutrality, but must be either friends or foes. They cannot be friends unless science can pass the examination which philosophy must set as to its premisses. If they cannot be friends, they can only destroy each other, it is no longer possible that either alone can remain master of the field.

Dr Whitehead offers two things, with a view to the philosophical justification of science. On the one hand, he presents certain new concepts, by means of which the physics of relativity and quanta can be built up in a way which is



more satisfying intellectually than any that results from piecemeal amendments to the old conception of solid matter. This part of his work, though not yet developed with the fullness that we may hope to see, lies within science as broadly conceived, and is capable of justification by the usual methods which lead us to prefer one theoretical interpretation of a set of facts to another. It is technically difficult, and I shall say no more about it. From our present point of view, the important aspect of Dr. Whitehead's work is its more philosophical portion. He not only offers us a better science, but a philosophy which is to make that science rational, in a sense in which traditional science has not been rational since the time of Hume. This philosophy is, in the main, very similar to that of Bergson. The difficulty which I feel here is that, in so far as Dr. Whitehead's new concepts can be embodied in formulae which can be submitted to the ordinary scientific or logical tests, they do not seem to involve his philosophy; his philosophy, therefore, must be accepted on its intrinsic merits. We must not accept it merely on the ground that, if true, it justifies science, for the question at issue is whether science can be justified. We must examine directly whether it seems to us to be true in fact; and here we find ourselves beset with all the old perplexities.

I will take only one point, but it is a crucial one. Bergson, as everyone knows, regards the past as surviving in memory, and also holds that nothing is ever really forgotten; on these

points it would seem that Dr Whitehead agrees with him. Now this is all very well as a poetic way of speaking, but it cannot (I should have thought) be accepted as a scientifically accurate way of stating the facts. If I recollect some past event—say my arrival in China—it is a mere figure of speech to say that I am arriving in China over again. Certain words, or images occur when I recollect, and are related to what I am recollecting, both causally and by a certain similarity, often little more than a similarity of logical structure. The scientific problem of the relation of a recollection to a past event remains intact, even if we choose to say that the recollection consists of a survival of the past event. For, if we say this, we must nevertheless admit that the event has changed in the interval, and we shall be faced with the scientific problem of finding the laws according to which it changes. Whether we call the recollection a new event or the old event greatly changed can make no difference to the scientific problem.

The great scandals in the philosophy of science ever since the time of Hume have been causality and induction. We all believe in both, but Hume made it appear that our belief is a blind faith for which no rational ground can be assigned. Dr Whitehead believes that his philosophy affords an answer to Hume. So did Kant. I find myself unable to accept either answer. And yet, in common with every one else, I cannot help believing that there must be an answer. This state of affairs is profoundly

unsatisfactory, and becomes more so as science becomes more entangled with philosophy. We must hope that an answer will be found; but I am quite unable to believe that it has been found.

Science as it exists at present is partly agreeable, partly disagreeable. It is agreeable through the power which it gives us of manipulating our environment, and to a small but important minority it is agreeable because it affords intellectual satisfactions. It is disagreeable because, however we may seek to disguise the fact, it assumes a determinism which involves, theoretically, the power of predicting human actions; in this respect it seems to lessen human power. Naturally people wish to keep the pleasant aspect of science without the unpleasant aspect; but so far the attempts to do so have broken down. If we emphasize the fact that our belief in causality and induction is irrational, we must infer that we do not know science to be true, and that it may at any moment cease to give us the control over the environment for the sake of which we like it. This alternative, however, is purely theoretical; it is not one which a modern man can adopt in practice. If, on the other hand, we admit the claims of scientific method, we cannot avoid the conclusion that causality and induction are applicable to human volitions as much as to anything else. All that has happened during the twentieth century in physics, physiology, and psychology goes to strengthen this conclusion. The outcome seems to be that, though the rational justi-

fication of science is theoretically inadequate, there is no method of securing what is pleasant in science without what is unpleasant. We can do so, of course, by refusing to face the logic of the situation, but, if so, we shall dry up the impulse to scientific discovery at its source, which is the desire to understand the world. It is to be hoped that the future will offer some more satisfactory solution of this tangled problem.

—*Bertrand Russell*

# THE PROGRESS OF ASTRONOMY

## GALILEO

On the evening of January 7, 1610, a fateful day for the human race, Galileo Galilei, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Padua, sat in front of a telescope he had made with his own hands.

More than three centuries previously, Roger Bacon, the inventor of spectacles, had explained how a telescope could be constructed so as "to make the stars appear as near as we please". He had shown how a lens could be so shaped that it would collect all the rays of light falling on it from a distant object, bend them until they met in a focus, and then pass them on through the pupil of the eye on to the retina. Such an instrument would increase the power of the human eye, just as an ear trumpet increases the power of the human ear by collecting all the waves of sound which fall on a large aperture, bending them, and passing them through the orifice of the ear on to the ear drum.

Yet it was not until 1608 that the first telescope had been constructed by Lippershey, a Flemish spectacle-maker. On hearing of this instrument, Galileo had set to work to discover the principles of its construction, and had soon made himself a telescope far better than the original. His instrument had created no small sensation in Italy. Such extraordinary stories

had been told of its powers that he had been commanded to take it to Venice and exhibit it to the Doge and Senate. The citizens of Venice had then seen the most aged of their senators climbing the highest bell towers to spy through the telescope at ships which were too far out at sea to be seen at all without its help. The telescope admitted about a hundred times as much light as the unaided human eye, and, according to Galileo, it showed an object at fifty miles as clearly as if it were only five miles away.

The absorbing interest of his new instrument had almost driven from Galileo's mind a problem to which he had at one time given much thought. Over two thousand years previously, Pythagoras and Philolaus had taught that the earth is not fixed in space but rotates on its axis every twenty-four hours, thus causing the alternation of day and night. Aristarchus of Samos, perhaps the greatest of all the Greek mathematicians, had further maintained that the earth not only turned on its axis, but also described a yearly journey round the sun, this being the cause of the cycle of the seasons.

Then these doctrines had fallen into disfavour. Aristotle had pronounced against them, asserting that the earth formed a fixed centre to the universe. Later Ptolemy had explained the tracks of the planets across the sky in terms of a complicated system of cycles and epicycles, the planets moved in circular paths around moving points, which themselves moved in circles around an immovable earth.

The Church had given its sanction and active support to these doctrines. Indeed, it is difficult to see what else it could have done, for it seemed almost impious to suppose that the great drama of man's fall and redemption, in which the Son of God had Himself taken part, could have been enacted on any lesser stage than the very centre of the universe.

Yet, even in the Church, the doctrine had not gained universal acceptance. Oresme, Bishop of Lisieux, and Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, had both declared against it, the latter writing in 1440:

"I have long considered that this earth is not fixed, but moves as do the other stars. To my mind the earth turns upon its axis once every day and night."

At a later date those who held these views incurred the active hostility of the Church, and in 1600 Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake. He had written:

"It has seemed to me unworthy of the divine goodness and power to create a finite world, when able to produce beside it another and others infinite; so that I have declared that there are endless particular worlds similar to this of the earth; with Pythagoras I regard it as a star, and similar to it are the moon, the planets and other stars, which are infinite in number, and all these bodies are worlds."

The most weighty attack on orthodox doctrine had, however, been delivered neither by theologians nor philosophers, but the Polish astronomer, Nicholaus Copernicus (1473-1543).

In his great work, *De revolutionibus orbium caelestium*, Copernicus had shown that Ptolemy's elaborate structure of cycles and epicycles was unnecessary, because the tracks of the planets across the sky could be explained quite simply by supposing that the earth and the planets all moved round a fixed central sun. The sixty-six years which had elapsed since this book was published had seen these theories hotly debated, but they were still neither proved nor disproved.

Galileo had already found that his new telescope provided a means of testing astronomical theories. As soon as he had turned it on to the Milky Way, a whole crowd of legends and fables as to its nature and structure had vanished into thin air, it proved to be nothing more than a swarm of faint stars scattered like golden dust on the black background of the sky. Another glance through the telescope had disclosed the true nature of the moon. It had on it mountains which cast shadows, and so proved, as Giordano Bruno had maintained, to be a world like our own. What if the telescope should now in some way prove able to decide between the orthodox doctrine that the earth formed the hub of the universe, and the new doctrine that the earth was only one of a number of bodies, all circling round the sun like moths round a candle-flame?

And now Galileo catches Jupiter in the field of his telescope, and sees four small bodies circling around the great mass of the planet—like moths round a candle-flame. What he sees is an exact replica of the solar system as



imagined by Copernicus, and it provides direct visual proof that such systems are at least not alien to the architectural plan of the universe. And yet, strangely enough, he hardly sees the full implications of his discovery at once; he merely avers that he had discovered four new planets which chase one another round and round the known planet Jupiter.

Final and complete understanding comes nine months later when he observes the phases of Venus. Venus might have been self-luminous, in which case she would a'ways appear as a full circle of light. If she were not self-luminous but moved in a Ptolemaic epicycle, then, as Ptolemy had himself pointed out, she could never show more than half her surface illuminated. On the other hand, the Copernican view of the solar system required that both Venus and Mercury should exhibit "phases" like those of the moon, their shining surfaces ranging in appearance from crescent-shape through half moon to full moon, and then back through half moon to crescent-shape. That such phases were not shown by Venus had indeed been urged as an objection to the Copernican theory.

Galileo's telescope now shows that, as Copernicus had foretold, Venus passes through the full cycle of phases, so that, in Galileo's own words, "we are now supplied with a determination most conclusive, and appealing to the evidence of our senses," that "Venus, and Mercury also, revolve around the sun, as do also all the rest of the planets, a truth believed

indeed by the Pythagorean school, by Copernicus, and by Kepler, but never proved by the evidence of our senses, as is now proved in the case of Venus and Mercury."

These discoveries of Galileo made it clear that Aristotle, Ptolemy, and the majority of those who had thought about these things in the last 2,000 years, had been utterly and hopelessly wrong. In estimating his position in the universe, man had up to now been guided mainly by his own desires, and his self esteem, long fed on boundless hopes, he had spurned the simpler fare offered by patient scientific thought. Inexorable facts now dethroned him from his self-arrogated station at the centre of the universe, henceforth he must reconcile himself to the humble position of the inhabitant of a speck of dust, and adjust his views on the meaning of human life accordingly.

The adjustment was not made at once. Human vanity, reinforced by the authority of the Church, contrived to make a rough road for those who dared draw attention to the earth's insignificant position in the universe. Galileo was forced to abjure his beliefs. Well on into the eighteenth century the ancient University of Paris taught that the motion of the earth round the sun was a convenient *but false* hypothesis, while the newer American universities of Harvard and Yale taught the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems of astronomy side by side as though they were equally tenable. Yet men could not keep their heads buried in the sand for ever, and when at last

its full implications were accepted, the revolution of thought initiated by Galileo's observations of January 7, 1610, proved to be the most catastrophic in the history of the race. The cataclysm was not confined to the realms of abstract thought; henceforth human existence itself was to appear in a new light, and human aims and aspirations would be judged from a different standpoint.

### THE MESSAGE OF MODERN ASTRONOMY

The central facts which dominate the whole situation are that we are dependent on the light and heat of the sun, and that these cannot remain for ever as they now are. So far as we can at present see, solar conditions can hardly have changed much since the earth was born; the earth's 20,000 million years form so small a fraction of the sun's whole life that we can almost suppose the sun to have stood still throughout it. This of itself suggests that, in so far as astronomical factors are concerned, life may look to a tenancy of the earth of far longer duration than the total past age of the earth....

Let us try to see these times in their proper proportion by the help of yet another simple model. Take a postage-stamp, and stick it on to a penny. Now climb Cleopatra's Needle and lay the penny flat, postage-stamp uppermost, on top of the obelisk. The height of the whole structure may be taken to represent the time that has elapsed since the earth was born. On this scale, the thickness of the penny and

postage stamp together represents the time that man has lived on earth. The thickness of the postage stamp represents the time he has been civilized, the thickness of the penny representing the time he lived in an uncivilized state. Now stick another postage stamp on top of the first to represent the next 50 000 years of civilization, and keep sticking on postage stamps until you have a pile as high as Mont Blanc. Even now the pile forms an inadequate representation of the length of the future, which so far as astronomy can see, probably stretches before civilized humanity. The first postage stamp was the past of civilization, the column higher than Mont Blanc is its future. Or, to look at it in another way, the first postage stamp represents what man has already achieved, the pile which out tops Mont Blanc represents what he may achieve, if his future achievement is proportional to his time on earth.

Looked at in terms of space, the message of astronomy is at best one of melancholy grandeur and oppressive vastness. Looked at in terms of time, it becomes one of almost endless possibility and hope. As denizens of the universe we may be living near its end rather than its beginning, for it seems likely that most of the universe had melted into radiation before we appeared on the scene. But as inhabitants of the earth, we are living at the very beginning of time. We have come into being in the fresh glory of the dawn and a day of almost unthinkable length stretches before us with

## THE PROGRESS OF ASTRONOMY

unimaginable opportunities for accomplishment. Our descendants of far-off ages, looking down this long vista of time from the other end, will see our present age as the misty morning of the world's history; our contemporaries of today will appear as dim heroic figures who fought their way through jungles of ignorance, error, and superstition to discover truth, to learn how to harness the forces of nature, and to make a world worthy for mankind to live in. We are still too much engulfed in the greyiness of the morning mists to be able to imagine, however vaguely, how this world of ours will appear to those who will come after us and see it in the full light of day. But by what light we have, we seem to discern that the main message of astronomy is one of hope to the race and of responsibility to the individual—of responsibility because we are drawing plans and laying foundations for a longer future than we can well imagine.

—*Sir James Jeans*

# THE BOY COMES HOME

## CHARACTERS

UNCLE JAMES  
AUNT EMILY  
PHILIP

MARY  
MRS HIGGINS

This play was first produced by Mr Owen Nares at the Victoria Palace Theatre, London, on September 9, 1918, with the following cast:

<i>Philip</i>	OWEN NARES
<i>Uncle James</i>	TOM REYNOLDS
<i>Aunt Emily</i>	DOROTHY RADFORD
<i>Mary</i>	ADAH DICK
<i>Mrs Higgins</i>	RACHEL DE SOLLA

SCENE. A room in UNCLE JAMES'S house in the Cromwell Road

TIME The day after the War

*Any room in UNCLE JAMES'S house is furnished in heavy mid-Victorian style, this particular morning-room is perhaps solidier and more respectable even than the others, from the heavy table in the middle of it to the heavy engravings on the walls. There are two doors to it. The one at the back opens into the hall, the one at the side into the dining room.*

PHILIP comes in from the hall and goes into the dining-room. Appar-ly he finds nothing there for he returns to the morning-room, looks about him for a moment and then rings the bell. It is ten o'clock, and he wants his breakfast. He picks up the paper, and sits in a heavy armchair in front of the fire—a pleasant-looking well-built person of twenty-three, with an air of decisiveness about him.

MARY, *the parlour-maid, comes in.*

MARY. Did you ring, Master Philip?

PHILIP [*absently*]. Yes; I want some breakfast, please, Mary.

MARY [*coldly*]. Breakfast has been cleared away an hour ago.

PHILIP. Exactly. That's why I rang. You can boil me a couple of eggs or something. And coffee, not tea.

MARY. I'm sure I don't know what Mrs Higgins will say?

PHILIP [*getting up*]. Who is Mrs Higgins?

MARY. The cook. And she's not used to being put about like this.

PHILIP. Do you think she'll say something?

MARY. I don't know *what* she'll say.

PHILIP. You needn't tell me, you know, if you don't want to. Anyway, I don't suppose it will shock me. One gets used to it in the Army.

[*He smiles pleasantly at her.*]

MARY. Well, I'll do what I can, sir. But breakfast at eight sharp is the master's rule, just as it used to be before you went away to the war.

PHILIP. Before I went away to the war I did a lot of silly things. Don't drag them up now. [*More curtly*] Two eggs, and if there's a ham bring that along too. [*He turns away.*]

MARY [*doubtfully, as she prepares to go*]. Well, I'm sure I don't know what Mrs Higgins will say. [*Exit MARY.*]

[*As she goes out she makes way for AUNT EMILY to come in, a kind-hearted mid-Victorian lady who has never had any desire for the vote.*]

EMILY *There you are, Philip!* Good morning, dear Did you sleep well?

PHILIP Rather, splendidly, thanks, Aunt Emily How are you? [*He kisses her*]

EMILY And did you have a good breakfast? Naughty boy to be late for it I always thought they had to get up so early in the Army

PHILIP They do That's why they're so late when they get out of the Army

EMILY Dear me! I should have thought a habit of four years would have stayed with you

PHILIP Every morning for four years, as I've shot out of bed I've said to myself, "Wait! A time will come" [*Smiling*] That doesn't really give a habit a chance

EMILY Well, I daresay you wanted your sleep out I was so afraid that a really cosy bed would keep you awake after all those years in the trenches

PHILIP Well, one isn't in the trenches all the time And one gets leave—if one's an officer

EMILY [*reproachfully*] You didn't spend much of it with us Philip

PHILIP [*taking her hands*] I know, but you did understand, didn't you, dear?

EMILY We're not very gay, and I know you must have wanted gaiety for the little time you had But I think your Uncle James felt it After all, dear, you've lived with us for some years, and he is your guardian

PHILIP I know You've been a darling to me always, Aunt Emily But [*awkwardly*] Uncle James and I—



EMILY. Of course, he is a *little* difficult to get on with. I'm more used to him. But I'm sure he really is very fond of you, Philip.

PHILIP. H'm! I always used to be frightened of him. . . I suppose he's just the same. He seemed just the same last night—and he still has breakfast at eight o'clock. Been making pots of money, I suppose?

EMILY. He never tells me exactly, but he did speak once about the absurdity of the excess-profits tax. You see, jam is a thing the Army wants.

PHILIP. It certainly gets it.

EMILY. It was so nice for him, because it made him feel he was doing his bit, helping the poor men in the trenches.

*Enter MARY*

MARY. Mrs Higgins wishes to speak to you, ma'am.

*[She looks at PHILIP as much as to say, "There you are!"]*

EMILY *[getting up]*. Yes, I'll come. *[To PHILIP]* I think I'd better just see what she wants, Philip.

PHILIP *[firmly to MARY]*. Tell Mrs Higgins to come here. *[MARY hesitates and looks at her mistress]*. At once, please.

*[Exit MARY.]*

EMILY *[upset]*. Philip, dear, I don't know what Mrs Higgins will say—

PHILIP. No; nobody seems to. I thought we might really find out for once.

EMILY *[going towards the door]*. Perhaps I'd better go—

PHILIP [*putting his arm round her waist*]  
Oh no, you mustn't You see, she really wants  
to see me

EMILY You ?

PHILIP Yes, I ordered breakfast five  
minutes ago

EMILY Philip ! My poor boy ! Why didn't  
you tell me ? And I daresay I could have got  
it for you Though I don't know what Mrs  
Higgins—

[*An extremely angry voice is heard outside,  
and MRS HIGGINS, stout and aggressive,  
comes in*

MRS HIGGINS [*truculently*] You sent for me,  
ma'am ?

EMILY [*nervously*] Yes—er—I think if you—  
perhaps—

PHILIP [*calmly*] I sent for you, Mrs Higgins.  
I want some breakfast Didn't Mary tell you ?

MRS HIGGINS Breakfast is at eight o'clock  
It always has been as long as I've been in this  
house, and always will be until I get further  
orders.

PHILIP Well, you've just got further orders  
Two eggs, and if there's a ham—

MRS HIGGINS Orders. We're talking about  
orders From whom in this house do I take  
orders, may I ask ?

PHILIP In this case from me

MRS HIGGINS [*playing her trump-card*] In  
that case, ma'am, I wish to give a month's  
notice from to-day. *Inclusive.*

PHILIP [*quickly, before his aunt can say  
anything*] Certainly. In fact, you'd probably

prefer it if my aunt gave *you* notice, and then you could go at once. We can easily arrange that. [TO AUNT EMILY *as he takes out a fountain-pen and cheque-book*] What do you pay her?

EMILY [*faintly*]. Forty-five pounds.

PHILIP [*writing on his knee*]. Twelves into forty-five.... [*Pleasantly to MRS HIGGINS, but without looking up*]. I hope you don't mind a Cox's cheque. Some people do; but this is quite a good one. [*Tearing it out*]. Here you are.

MRS HIGGINS [*taken aback*]. What's this?

PHILIP. Your wages instead of notice. Now you can go at once.

MRS HIGGINS. Who said anything about going?

PHILIP [*surprised*]. I'm sorry; I thought *you* did.

MRS HIGGINS. If it's only a bit of breakfast, I don't say but what I mightn't get it, if I'm asked decent.

PHILIP [*putting back the cheque*]. Then let me say again, "Two eggs, ham and coffee." And Mary can bring the ham up at once, and I'll get going on that. [*Turning away*] Thanks very much.

MRS HIGGINS. Well, I—well—well!

[*Exit speechless*].

PHILIP [*surprised*]. Is that all she ever says? It isn't much to worry about.

EMILY. Philip, how could you! I should have been terrified.

PHILIP. Well, you see, I've done your job for two years out there.

EMILY What job ?

PHILIP Mess President I think I'll go  
and see about that ham

*[He smiles at her and goes out into the dining room AUNT EMILY wanders round the room, putting a few things tidy as is her habit, when she is interrupted by the entrance of UNCLE JAMES JAMES is not a big man, nor an impressive one in his black morning coat, and his thin straggly beard, now going grey, does not hide a chin of any great power, but he has a severity which passes for strength with the weak*

JAMES Philip down yet ?

EMILY He's just having his breakfast

JAMES *[looking at his watch]* Ten o'clock  
*[Snapping it shut and putting it back]* Ten o'clock  
I say ten o'clock, Emily

EMILY Yes, dear, I heard you

JAMES You don't say anything ?

EMILY *[vaguely]* I expect he's tired after  
that long war

JAMES That's no excuse for not being  
punctual I suppose he learnt punctuality in  
the Army ?

EMILY I expect he learnt it, James, but I  
understood him to say that he'd forgotten it

JAMES Then the sooner he learns it again  
the better I particularly stayed away from  
the office to day in order to talk things over  
with him, and *[looking at his watch]* here's ten  
o'clock—past ten—and no sign of him I'm

practically throwing away a day.

EMILY. What are you going to talk to him about?

JAMES. His future, naturally. I have decided that the best thing he can do is to come into the business at once.

EMILY. Are you really going to talk it over with him, James or are you just going to tell him that he *must* come?

JAMES [*Surprised*]. What do you mean? What's the difference? Naturally we shall talk it over first, and——er——naturally he'll fall in with my wishes.

EMILY. I suppose he can hardly help himself, poor boy.

JAMES. Not until he's twenty-five anyhow. When he's twenty-five he can have his own money and do what he likes with it.

EMILY [*timidly*]. But I think you ought to consult him a little, dear. After all, he *has* been fighting for us.

JAMES [*with his back to the fire*]. Now that's the sort of silly sentiment that there's been much too much of. I object to it strongly. I don't want to boast, but I think I may claim to have done my share. I gave up my nephew to my country, and I——er——suffered from the shortage of potatoes to an extent that you probably didn't realize. Indeed, if it hadn't been for your fortunate discovery about that time that you didn't really like potatoes, I don't know how we should have carried on. And as I think I've told you before, the excess-profits tax seemed to me a singularly stupid piece of

legislation—but I paid it And I don't go boasting about how much I paid

EMILY [*unconvinced*] Well, I think that Philip's four years out there have made him more of a man, he doesn't seem somehow like a boy who can be told what to do I'm sure they've taught him something

JAMES I've no doubt that they've taught him something about—er—bombs and—er—which end a revolver goes off, and how to form fours But I don't see that that sort of thing helps him to decide upon the most suitable career for a young man in after-war conditions

EMILY Well, I can only say you'll find them different

JAMES I didn't notice any particular difference last night

EMILY I think you'll find him rather more—I can't quite think of the word, but Mrs Higgins could tell you what I mean

JAMES Of course, if he likes to earn his living any other way, he may, but I don't see how he proposes to do it so long as I hold the purse-strings [*Looking at his watch*] Perhaps you'd better tell him that I cannot wait any longer

[*EMILY opens the door leading into the dining room and talks through it to PHILIP*]

EMILY Philip, your uncle is waiting to see you before he goes to the office Will you be long, dear?

PHILIP [*from the dining-room*] Is he in a hurry?

JAMES [*shortly*]. Yes.

EMILY. He says he *is* rather, dear.

PHILIP. Couldn't he come and talk in here? It wouldn't interfere with my breakfast.

JAMES. No.

EMILY. He says he'd rather you came to *him*, darling.

PHILIP [*resigned*]. Oh, well.

EMILY [*to JAMES*]. He'll be here directly, dear. Just sit down in front of the fire and make yourself comfortable with the paper. He won't keep you long. [*She arranges him.*]

JAMES [*taking the paper*]. The morning is not the time to make oneself comfortable. It's a most dangerous habit. I nearly found myself dropping off in front of the fire just now. I don't like this hanging about, wasting the day. [*He opens the paper.*]

EMILY. You should have had a nice sleep, dear, while you could. We were up so late last night listening to Philip's stories.

JAMES. Yes, yes. [*He begins a yawn and stifles it hurriedly*]. You mustn't neglect your duties, Emily. I've no doubt you have plenty to do.

EMILY. All right, James, then I'll leave you. But don't be hard on the boy.

JAMES [*sleepily*]. I shall be just, Emily; you can rely upon that.

EMILY [*going to the door*]. I don't think that's quite what I meant. [*She goes out.*]

[JAMES, *who is now quite comfortable, begins to nod. He wakes up with a*

*start, turns over the paper, and nods again. Soon he is breathing deeply with closed eyes*

\* \* \* \*

PHILIP [*coming in*] Sorry to have kept you waiting, but I was a bit late for breakfast [*He takes out his pipe*] Are we going to talk business or what?

JAMES [*taking out his watch*] A bit late! I make it just two hours

PHILIP [*pleasantly*] All right, Uncle James. Call it two hours late. Or twenty-two hours early for to-morrow's breakfast, if you like.

*[He sits down in a chair on the opposite side of the table from his uncle, and lights his pipe]*

JAMES You smoke now?

PHILIP [*staggered*] I what?

JAMES [*nodding at his pipe*] You smoke?

PHILIP Good heavens! what do you think we *did* in France?

JAMES Before you start smoking all over the house, I should have thought you would have asked your Aunt's permission.

*[PHILIP looks at him in amazement and then goes to the door]*

PHILIP [*calling*] Aunt Emily! Aunt Emily! Do you mind my smoking in here?

AUNT EMILY [*from upstairs*] Of course not, darling.

PHILIP [*to JAMES, as he returns to his chair*] Of course not, darling.

*[He puts back his pipe in his mouth]*

JAMES Now, understand once and for all,



Philip, while you remain in my house I expect not only punctuality, but also civility and respect. I will *not* have impertinence.

PHILIP [*unimpressed*]. Well, that's what I want to talk to you about, Uncle James. About staying in your house, I mean.

JAMES. I don't know what you do mean.

PHILIP. Well, we don't get on too well together, and I thought perhaps I'd better take rooms somewhere. You could give me an allowance until I came into my money. Or I suppose you could give me the money now if you really liked. I don't quite know how father left it to me.

JAMES [*coldly*]. You come into your money when you are twenty-five. Your father very wisely felt that to trust a large sum to a mere boy of twenty-one was simply putting temptation in his way. Whether I have the power or not to alter his dispositions, I certainly don't propose to do so.

PHILIP. If it comes to that, I *am* twenty-five.

JAMES. Indeed ? I had an impression that that event took place in about two years' time. When did you become twenty-five, may I ask ?

PHILIP [*quietly*]. It was on the Somme. We were attacking the next day and my company was in support. We were in a so-called trench on the edge of a wood—a damned rotten place to be, and we got hell. The company commander sent back to ask if we could move. The C.O. said, "Certainly not : hang on." We hung on : doing nothing, you know—just hanging on and

waiting for the next day. Of course, the Boche knew all about that. He had it on us nicely [Sadly] Poor old Billy! he was one of the best—our company commander, you know. They got him, poor devil! That left *me* in command of the company. I sent a runner back to ask if I could move. Well, I'd had a bit of a scout on my own and found a sort of trench, five hundred yards to the right. Not what *you'd* call a trench, of course, but compared to that wood—well, it was absolutely Hyde Park. I described the position and asked if I could go there. My man never came back. I waited an hour and sent another man. He went west too. Well, I wasn't going to send a third. It was murder. So I had to decide. We'd lost about half the company by this time, you see. Well, there were three things I could do—hang on, move to this other trench, against orders, or go back myself and explain the situation. I moved. And then I went back to the C.O. and told him I'd moved. And then I went back to the company again. [Quietly] That was when I became twenty-five or thirty-five or forty-five.

JAMES [*recovering himself with an effort*] Ah yes, yes. [*He coughs awkwardly*] No doubt points like that frequently crop up in the trenches. I am glad that you did well out there, and I'm sure your Colonel would speak kindly of you, but when it comes to choosing a career for you now that you have left the Army, my advice is not altogether to be despised. Your father evidently thought so, or he would

not have entrusted you to my care.

PHILIP. My father didn't foresee this war.

JAMES. Yes, yes, but you make too much of this war. All you young boys seem to think you've come back from France to teach us our business. You'll find that it is you who'll have to learn, not we.

PHILIP. I'm quite prepared to learn; in fact, I want to.

JAMES. Excellent. Then we can consider that settled.

PHILIP. Well, we haven't settled yet what business I'm going to learn.

JAMES. I don't think that's very difficult. I propose to take you into my business. You'll start at the bottom, of course, but it will be a splendid opening for you.

PHILIP [*thoughtfully*]. I see. So you've decided it for me? The jam business.

JAMES [*sharply*]. Is there anything to be ashamed of in that?

PHILIP. Oh, no nothing at all. Only it doesn't happen to appeal to me.

JAMES. If you knew which side your bread was buttered, it would appeal to you very considerably.

PHILIP. I'm afraid I can't see the butter for the jam.

JAMES. I don't want any silly jokes of that sort. You were glad enough to get it out there, I've no doubt.

PHILIP. Oh yes. Perhaps that's why I'm so sick of it now. No, it's no good, Uncle James; you must think of something else.

JAMES [*with a sneer*] Perhaps you're thought of something else?

PHILIP Well I had some idea of being an architect—

JAMES You propose to start learning to be an architect at twenty-three?

PHILIP [*smiling*] Well, I couldn't start before, could I?

JAMES Exactly And now you'll find it's *too late*

PHILIP Is it? Aren't there going to be any more architects, or doctors, or solicitors, or barristers? Because we've all lost four years of our lives, are all the professions going to die out?

JAMES And how old do you suppose you'll be before you're earning money as an architect?

PHILIP The usual time, whatever that may be If I'm four years behind, so is everybody else

JAMES Well, I think it's high time you began to earn a living at once

PHILIP Look here, Uncle James, do you really think that you can treat me like a boy who's just left school? Do you think four years at the front have made no difference at all?

JAMES If there had been any difference, I should have expected it to take the form of an increased readiness to obey orders and recognize authority

PHILIP [*regretfully*] You are evidently determined to have a row Perhaps I had better tell you once and for all that I refuse to

go into the turnip and vegetable marrow business.

JAMES [*thumping the table angrily*]. And perhaps I'd better tell *you*, sir, once and for all, that I don't propose to allow rudeness from an impertinent young puppy.

PHILIP [*reminiscently*]. I remember annoying our Brigadier once. He was covered with red, had a very red face, about twenty medals, and a cold blue eye. He told me how angry he was for about five minutes while I stood to attention. I'm afraid you aren't nearly so impressive, Uncle James.

JAMES [*rather upset*]. Oh ! [*Recovering himself*] Fortunately I have other means of impressing you. The power of the purse goes a long way in this world. I propose to use it.

PHILIP. I see..Yes..that's rather awkward, isn't it ?

JAMES [*pleasantly*]. I think you'll find it very awkward.

PHILIP [*thoughtfully*]. Yes.

[*With an amused laugh JAMES settles down to his paper as if the interview were over.*]

PHILIP [*to himself*]. I suppose I shall have to think of another argument.

[*He takes out a revolver from his pocket and fondles it affectionately.*]

JAMES [*looking up suddenly as he is doing this—amazed*]. What on earth are you doing ?

PHILIP. Souvenir from France. Do you know, Uncle James, that this revolver has killed about twenty Germans ?

JAMES [*shortly*] Oh! Well, don't go playing about with it here, or you'll be killing Englishmen before you know where you are

PHILIP Well you never know [*He raises it leisurely and points it at his uncle*] It's a nice little weapon

JAMES [*angrily*] Put it down, sir You ought to have grown out of monkey tricks like that in the Army You ought to know better than to point an unloaded revolver at anybody That's the way accidents always happen

PHILIP Not when you've been on a revolver course and know all about it Besides, it is loaded

JAMES [*very angry because he is frightened suddenly*] Put it down at once, sir [PHILIP turns it away from him and examines it carelessly] What's the matter with you? Have you gone mad suddenly?

PHILIP [*mildly*] I thought you'd be interested in it It's shot such a lot of Germans

JAMES Well, it won't want to shoot any more, and the sooner you get rid of it the better

PHILIP I wonder Does it ever occur to you, Uncle James, that there are about a hundred thousand people in England who own revolvers, who are quite accustomed to them and—who have nobody to practise on now?

JAMES No, sir, it certainly doesn't

PHILIP [*thoughtfully*] I wonder if it will make any difference You know, one gets so used to potting at people It's rather difficult

to realize suddenly that one oughtn't to.

JAMES [*getting up*]. I don't know what the object of all this tomfoolery is, if it has one. But you understand that I expect you to come to the office with me to-morrow at nine o'clock. Kindly see that you're punctual.

[*He turns to go away.*]

PHILIP [*softly*]. . Uncle James.

JAMES [*over his shoulder*]. I have no more—

PHILIP [*in his parade voice*]. Damm it, sir! stand to attention when you talk to an officer! [JAMES *instinctively turns round and stiffens himself*]. That's better; you can sit down if you like. [*He motions JAMES to his chair with the revolver*].

JAMES [*going nervously to his chair*]. What does this bluff mean?

PHILIP. It isn't bluff, it's quite serious. [*Pointing the revolver at his uncle*]. Do sit down.

JAMES [*sitting down*]. Threats, eh?

PHILIP. Persuasion.

JAMES. At the point of the revolver? You settle your arguments by force? Good heavens sir! this is just the very thing that we were fighting to put down.

PHILIP. *We* were fighting! *We! We!* Uncle, your're a humorist.

JAMES. Well, "you", if you prefer it. Although those of us who stayed at home—

PHILIP. Yes, never mind about the excess profits now. I can tell you quite well what we fought for. We used force to put down force. That's what I'm doing now. You were going to use force—the force of money—to make me

do what you wanted. Now I'm using force to stop it. [*He levels the revolver again*]

JAMES You're—you're going to shoot your old uncle ?

PHILIP Why not ? I've shot lots of old uncles—Landsturmiers

JAMES But those were Germans ! It's different shooting Germans. You're in England now. You couldn't have a crime on your conscience like that.

PHILIP Ah, but you mustn't think that after four years of war one has quite the same ideas about the sanctity of human life. How could one ?

JAMES You'll find that juries have kept pretty much the same ideas, I fancy.

PHILIP Yes, but revolvers often go off accidentally. You said so yourself. This is going to be the purest accident. Can't you see it in the papers ? "The deceased's nephew, who was obviously upset—"

JAMES I suppose you think it's brave to come back from the front and threaten a defenceless man with a revolver ? Is that the sort of fair play they teach you in the Army ?

PHILIP Good heavens ! of course it is. You don't think that you wait until the other side has got just as many guns as you before you attack ? You're really rather lucky. Strictly speaking, I ought to have thrown half a dozen bombs at you first. [*Taking one out of his pocket*] As it happens, I've only got one.

JAMES [*thoroughly alarmed*] Put that back at once



PHILIP [*putting down the revolver and taking it in his hands*]. You hold it in the right hand—so—taking care to keep the lever down. Then you take the pin in the finger—so, and—but perhaps this doesn't interest you?

JAMES [*edging his chair away*]. Put it down at once, sir. Good heavens! anything might happen.

PHILIP [*putting it down and taking up the revolver again*]. Does it ever occur to you, Uncle James, that there are about three million people in England who know all about bombs, and how to throw them, and—

JAMES. It certainly does not occur to me. I should never dream of letting these things occur to me.

PHILIP [*looking at the bomb regretfully*]. It's rather against my principles as a soldier, but just to make things a bit more fair—[*generously*] you shall have it.

[*He holds it out to him suddenly.*]

JAMES [*shrinking back again*]. Certainly not, sir. It might go off at any moment.

PHILIP [*putting it back in his pocket*]. Oh no; it's quite useless; there's no detonator. . . . . [*Sternly*] Now, then, let's talk business.

JAMES. What do you want me to do?

PHILIP. Strictly speaking, you should be holding your hands over your head and saying "Kamerad!" However, I'll let you off that. All I ask from you is that you should be reasonable.

JAMES. And if I refuse, you'll shoot me?

PHILIP. Well, I don't quite know, Uncle James. I expect we should go through this

little scene again to-morrow You haven't enjoyed it, have you? Well, there's lots more of it to come We'll rehearse it every day One day, if you go on being unreasonable, the thing will go off Of course, you think that I shouldn't have the pluck to fire But you can't be quite certain It's a hundred to one that I shan't—only I might Fear—it's a horrible thing Elderly men die of it sometimes

JAMES Pooh! I'm not to be bluffed like that

PHILIP [*suddenly*] You're quite right, you're not that sort I made a mistake [*Aiming carefully*] I shall have to do it straight off, after all One—two—

JAMES [*on his knees, with uplifted hands, in an agony of terror*] Philip! Mercy! What are your terms?

PHILIP [*picking him up by the scruff, and helping him into the chair*] Good man, that's the way to talk. I'll get them for you Make yourself comfortable in front of the fire till I come back Here's the paper

[*He gives his uncle the paper, and goes out into the hall*]

\* \* \* \*

[JAMES opens his eyes with a start and looks round him in a bewildered way He rubs his head, takes out his watch and looks at it, and then stares round the room again The door from the dining-room opens, and PHILIP comes in with a piece of toast in his hand

PHILIP [*his mouth full*] You wanted to see

me, Uncle James ?

JAMES [*still bewildered*]. That's all right, my boy, that's all right. What have you been doing ?

PHILIP [*surprised*]. Breakfast. [*Putting the last piece in his mouth*] Rather late, I'm afraid.

JAMES. That's all right.

[*He laughs awkwardly.*]

PHILIP. Anything the matter ? You don't look your usual bright self.

JAMES. I—er—seem to have dropped asleep in front of the fire. Most unusual thing for me to have done. Most unusual.

PHILIP. Let that be a lesson to you not to get up so early. Of course, if you're in the Army you can't help yourself. Thank heaven I'm out of it, and my own master again.

JAMES. Ah, that's what I wanted to talk to you about. Sit down, Philip.

[*He indicates the chair by the fire.*]

PHILIP. [*taking a chair by the table*]. You have that, uncle; I shall be all right here.

JAMES [*hastily*]. No, no; you come here. [*He gives PHILIP the armchair and sits by the table himself*]. I should be dropping off again.

[*He laughs awkwardly.*]

PHILIP. Righto.

[*He puts his hand in his pocket. UNCLE JAMES shivers and looks at him in horror. PHILIP bring out his pipe, and a sickly grin of relief comes into JAMES'S face.*]

JAMES. I suppose you smoked a lot in France ?

PHILIP Rather! Nothing else to do It's allowed in here?

JAMES [*hastily*] Yes, yes, of course [PHILIP *lights his pipe*] Well now, Philip, what are you going to do, now you've left the Army?

PHILIP [*promptly*] Burn my uniform and sell my revolver

JAMES [*starting at the word "revolver"*] Sell your revolver, eh?

PHILIP [*surprised*] Well, I don't want it now, do I?

JAMES No Oh no Oh, most certainly not, I should say Oh, I can't see why you should want it at all [*With an uneasy laugh*] You're in England now No need for revolvers here—eh?

PHILIP [*staring at him*] Well, no, I hope not

JAMES [*hastily*] Quite so Well now, Philip, what next? We must find a profession for you

PHILIP [*yawning*] I suppose so I haven't really thought about it much

JAMES You never wanted to be an architect?

PHILIP [*surprised*] Architect?

[JAMES  *rubs his head and wonders what made him think of architect*

JAMES Or anything like that

PHILIP It's a bit late, isn't it?

JAMES Well, if you're four years behind, so is everybody else

[*He feels vaguely that he has heard this argument before*

PHILIP [*smiling*]. To tell the truth, I don't feel I mind much anyway. Anything you like—except a commissionaire. I absolutely refuse to wear uniform again.

JAMES. How would you like to come into the business ?

PHILIP. The jam business ? Well, I don't know. You wouldn't want me to salute you in the mornings ?

JAMES. My dear boy, no !

PHILIP. All right, I'll try it if you like. I don't know if I shall be any good—what do you do ?

JAMES. It's your experience in managing and—er—handling men which I hope will be of value.

PHILIP. Oh, I can do that all right. [*Stretching himself luxuriously*] Uncle James, do you realize that I'm never going to salute again, or wear a uniform, or get wet—really wet, I mean—or examine men's feet, or stand to attention when I'm spoken to, or—oh, lots more things ? And best of all, I'm never going to be frightened again. Have you ever known what it is to be afraid—really afraid ?

JAMES [*embarrassed*]. I—er—well—

[*He coughs.*]

PHILIP. No, you couldn't—not really afraid of death, I mean. Well, that's over now. Good lord ! I could spend the rest of my life in the British Museum and be happy.....

JAMES [*getting up*]. All right, we'll try you in the office. I expect you want a holiday first, though.

PHILIP [*getting up*] My dear uncle, this is holiday. Being in London is holiday. Buying an evening paper—wearing a waistcoat again—running after a bus—anything—it's all holiday.

JAMES All right, then, come along with me now, and I'll introduce you to Mr Bamford.

PHILIP Right. Who's he?

JAMES Our manager. A little stiff, but a very good fellow. He'll be delighted to hear that you are coming into the firm.

PHILIP [*smiling*] Perhaps I'd better bring my revolver, in case he isn't.

JAMES [*laughing with forced heartiness as they go together to the door*] Ha, ha! A good joke that! Ha, ha! ha! A good joke—but only a joke, of course, Ha, ha! He, he, he!

[PHILIP goes out. JAMES, following him, turns at the door, and looks round the room in a bewildered way. Was it a dream, or wasn't it? He will never be quite certain.]

CURTAIN

—A. A. Milne

# A NIGHT AT AN INN

## CHARACTERS

A.E. SCOTT-FORTE- SCUE (THE TOFF), <i>a dilapidated gentleman</i>	FIRST PRIEST OF KLESH SECOND PRIEST OF KLESH THIRD PRIEST OF KLESH KLESH
WILLIAM JONES (BILL)	} <i>merchant sailors</i>
ALBERT THOMAS	
JACOB SMITH (SNIGGERS)	

*The curtain rises on a room in an inn. SNIGGERS and BILL are talking, THE TOFF is reading a paper. ALBERT sits a little apart.*

SNIGGERS. What's his idea, I wonder?

BILL. I don't know.

SNIGGERS. And how much longer will he keep us here ?

BILL. We've been here three days.

SNIGGERS. And 'aven't seen a soul.

BILL. And a pretty penny it cost us when he rented the pub.

SNIGGERS. 'Ow long did 'e rent the pub for ?

BILL. You never know with him.

SNIGGERS. It's lonely enough.

BILL. 'Ow long did you rent the pub for, Toffy ?

*[THE TOFF continues to read a sporting paper; he takes no notice of what is said.]*

SNIGGERS. 'E's such a toff.

BILL Yet 'e's clever, no mistake

SNIGGERS Those clever ones are the beggars to make a muddle Their plans are clever enough, but they don't work, and then they make a mess of things much worse than you or me

BILL Ah!

SNIGGERS I don't like this place

BILL Why not?

SNIGGERS I don't like the looks of it

BILL He's keeping us here because here those niggers can't find us The three heathen priests what was looking for us so But we want to go and sell our ruby soon

ALBERT There's no sense in it

BILL Why not, Albert?

ALBERT Because I gave those black devils the slip in Hull

BILL You give 'em the slip, Albert?

ALBERT The slip, all three of them The fellows with the gold spots on their foreheads I had the ruby then and I give them the slip in Hull

BILL How did you do it, Albert?

ALBERT I had the ruby and they were following me

BILL Who told them you had the ruby? You didn't show it

ALBERT No But they kind of know

SNIGGERS They kind of know, Albert?

ALBERT Yes, they know if you've got it Well, they sort of mouched after me, and I tells a policeman and he says, O, they were only three poor niggers and they wouldn't hurt me



Ugh! When I thought of what they did in Malta to poor old Jim.

BILL. Yes, and to George in Bombay before we started.

SNIGGERS. Ugh!

BILL. Why didn't you give 'em in charge?

ALBERT. What about the ruby, Bill?

BILL. Ah!

ALBERT. Well, I did better than that. I walks up and down through Hull. I walks slow enough. And then I turns a corner and I runs. I never sees a corner but I turns it. But sometimes I let a corner pass just to fool them. I twists about like a hare. Then I sits down and waits. No priests.

SNIGGERS. What?

ALBERT. No heathen black devils with gold spots on their face. I give 'em the slip.

BILL. Well done, Albert!

SNIGGERS [*after a sigh of content*]. Why didn't you tell us?

ALBERT. 'Cause 'e won't let you speak. 'E's got 'is plans and 'e thinks we're silly folk. Things must be done 'is way. And all the time I've give 'em the slip. Might 'ave 'ad one o' them crooked knives in him before now but for me who give 'em the slip in Hull.

BILL. Well done, Albert! Do you hear that, Toffy? Albert has give 'em the slip.

THE TOFF. Yes, I hear.

SNIGGERS. Well, what do you say to that?

THE TOFF. Oh!..Well done, Albert!

ALBERT. And what a' you going to do?

THE TOFF. Going to wait.

ALBERT Don't seem to know what 'e's waiting for

SNIGGERS It's a nasty place

ALBERT It's getting silly, Bill Our money's gone and we want to sell the ruby Let's get on to a town

BILL But 'e won't come

ALBERT Then we'll leave him

SNIGGERS We'll be all right if we keep away from Hull

ALBERT We'll go to London

BILL But e must 'ave 'is share

SNIGGERS All right Only let's go [To THE TOFF] We're going, do you hear? Give us the ruby

THE TOFF Certainly [He gives them a ruby from his waistcoat pocket, it is the size of a small hen's egg He goes on reading his paper]

ALBERT Come on, Sniggers

[Exeunt ALBERT and SNIGGERS]

BILL Good bye, old man We'll give you your fair share, but there's nothing to do here—no girls, no halls and we must sell the ruby

THE TOFF I'm not a fool, Bill

BILL No, no, of course not Of course you ain't, and you've helped us a lot Good bye You'll say good bye?

THE TOFF Oh, yes Good bye [Still reads his paper Exit BILL THE TOFF puts a revolver on the table besides him and goes on with his paper After a moment the three men come rushing in again, frightened]

SNIGGERS [out of breath] We've come back, Toffy

THE TOFF. So you have.

ALBERT. Toffy..How did they get here ?

THE TOFF. They walked, of course.

ALBERT. But it's eighty miles.

SNIGGERS. Did you know they were here, Toffy ?

THE TOFF. Expected them about now.

ALBERT. Eighty miles !

BILL. Toffy, old man..What are we to do ?

THE TOFF. Ask Albert.

BILL. If they can do things like this, there's no one can save us but you, Toffy....I always knew you were a clever one. We won't be fools any more. We'll obey you Toffy.

THE TOFF. You're brave enough and strong enough. There isn't many that would steal a ruby eye out of an idol's head, and such an idol as that was to look at, and on such a night. You're brave enough, Bill. But you're all three of you fools. Jim would have none of my plans, and where's Jim? And George. What did they do to him ?

SNIGGERS. Don't, Toffy !

THE TOFF. Well, then, your strength is no use to you. You want cleverness; or they'll have you the way they had George and Jim.

All. Ugh !

THE TOFF. Those black priests would follow you round the world in circles. Year after year, till they got the idol's eye. And if we died with it, they'd follow our grandchildren. That fool thinks he can escape from men like that by running round three streets in the town of Hull.

ALBERT *God's truth, you 'aven't escaped them, because they're 'ere*

THE TOFF *So I supposed*

ALBERT *You supposed !*

THE TOFF *Yes, I believe there's no announcement in the Society papers But I took this country seat especially to receive them There's plenty of room if you dig, it is pleasantly situated, and, what is more important, it is in a very quiet neighbourhood So I am at home to them this afternoon*

BILL *Well, you're a deep one*

THE TOFF *And remember, you've only my wits between you and death, and don't put your futile plans against those of an educated gentleman*

ALBERT *If you're a gentleman, why don't you go about among gentlemen instead of the likes of us ?*

THE TOFF *Because I was too clever for them as I am too clever for you.*

ALBERT *Too clever for them ?*

THE TOFF *I never lost a game of cards in my life*

BILL *You never lost a game ?*

THE TOFF. *Not when there was money in it.*

BILL *Well, well*

THE TOFF. *Have a game of poker ?*

ALL *No, thanks*

THE TOFF *Then do as you're told.*

BILL *All right, Toffy.*

SNIGGERS *I saw something just then Hadn't we better draw the curtains ?*

THE TOFF. *No*

SNIGGERS. What ?

THE TOFF. Don't draw the curtains.

SNIGGERS. Oh, all right.

BILL. But, Toffy, they can see us. One doesn't let the enemy do that. I don't see why....

THE TOFF. No, of course, you don't.

BILL. Oh, all right, Toffy.

*[All begin to pull out revolvers.]*

THE TOFF *[putting his own away]*. No revolvers, please.

ALBERT. Why not ?

THE TOFF. Because I don't want any noise at my party. We might get guests that hadn't been invited. *Knives* are a different matter.

*[All draw knives. THE TOFF signs to them not to draw them yet. TOFFY has already taken back his ruby.]*

BILL. I think they are coming, Toffy.

THE TOFF. Not yet.

ALBERT. When will they come ?

THE TOFF. When I am quite ready to receive them. Not before.

SNIGGERS. I should like to get this over.

THE TOFF. Should you ? Then we'll have them now.

SNIGGERS. Now ?

THE TOFF. Yes. Listen to me. You shall do as you see me do. You will all pretend to go out. I'll show you how. I've got the ruby. When they see me alone they will come for their idol's eye.

BILL. How can they tell like this which of us has it ?

THE TOFF I confess I don't know, but they seem to

SNIGGERS What will you do when they come in ?

THE TOFF I shall do nothing

SNIGGERS What ?

THE TOFF They will creep up behind me Then my friends Sniggers and Bill and Albert, who gave them the slip, will do what they can

BILL All right, Toffy Trust us

THE TOFF If you're a little slow, you will see enacted the cheerful spectacle that accompanied the demise of Jim

SNIGGERS Don't, Toffy We'll be there, all right

THE TOFF Very well Now watch me [*He goes past the windows to the inner door R He opens it inwards, then, under cover of the open door, he slips down on his knee and closes it, remaining on the inside, appearing to have gone out He signs to the others who understand Then he appears to re enter in the same manner*]

THE TOFF Now, I shall sit with my back to the door You go out one by one, so far as our friends can make out Crouch very low to be on the safe side They mustn't see you through the window [*BILL makes his sham exit*]

THE TOFF Remember, no revolvers The police are I believe, proverbially inquisitive

[*The other two follow* BILL All three are now crouching inside the door R THE TOFF puts the ruby beside him on the table He lights a cigarette The door at the back opens

so slowly that you can hardly say at what moment it began. THE TOFF picks up his paper. A native of India wriggles along the floor ever so slowly, seeking cover from chairs. He moves L., where THE TOFF is. The three sailors are R. SNIGGERS and ALBERT lean forward. BILL'S arm keeps them back. An armchair had better conceal them from the Indian. The black PRIEST nears THE TOFF. BILL watches to see if any more are coming. Then he leaps forward alone—he has taken his boots off—and knifes the PRIEST. The PRIEST tries to shout, but BILL'S left hand is over his mouth. THE TOFF continues to read his sporting paper. He never looks around.

BILL [*sotto voce*]. There's only one, Toffy. What shall we do?

THE TOFF [*without turning his head*]. Only one?

BILL. Yes.

THE TOFF. Wait a moment. Let me think. [*Still apparently absorbed in his paper*]. Ah, yes. You go back, Bill. We must attract another guest....Now, are you ready?

BILL. Yes.

THE TOFF. All right. You shall now see my demise at my Yorkshire residence. You must receive guests for me. [*He leaps up in full view of the window, flings up both arms and falls to the floor near the dead PRIEST*. Now be

ready [His eyes close There is a long pause  
 Again the door opens, very, very slowly Another  
 PRIEST creeps in He has three golden spots upon  
 his forehead He looks round, then he creeps up  
 to his companion and turns him over and looks inside  
 of his clenched hands Then he looks at the recum-  
 bent TOFF Then he creeps towards him BILL  
 slips after him and knifes him like the other with  
 his left hand over his mouth

BILL [Sotto voce] We've only got two,  
 Toffy

THE TOFF Still another

BILL What'll we do?

THE TOFF [Sitting up] Hum

BILL This is the best way, much

THE TOFF Out of the question Never play  
 the same game twice

BILL Why not, Toffy?

THE TOFF Doesn't work if you do

BILL Well?

THE TOFF I have it, Albert You will now  
 walk into the room I showed you how to do it

ALBERT Yes

THE TOFF Just run over here and have a  
 fight at this window with these two men

ALBERT But they're

THE TOFF Yes, they're dead, my perspi-  
 cuous Albert But Bill and I are going to  
 resuscitate them Come on [BILL picks up  
 a body under the arms]

THE TOFF That's right, Bill [Does the  
 same] Come and help us, Sniggers [SNIGGERS  
 comes] Keep low, keep low Wave their arms  
 about, Sniggers Don't show yourself Now,



Albert, over you go. Our Albert is slain. Back you get, Bill. Back, Sniggers. Still, Albert. Mustn't move when he comes. Not a muscle.

*[A face appears at the window and stays for some time. Then the door opens and, looking craftily round, the third PRIEST enters. He looks at his companions' bodies and turns round. He suspects something. He takes up one of the knives; and with a knife in each hand he puts his back to the wall. He looks to the left and right.]*

THE TOFF. Come on, Bill.

*[The PRIEST rushes to the door. THE TOFF knifes the last PRIEST from behind.]*

THE TOFF. A good day's work, my friends.

BILL. Well done, Toffy. Oh, you are a deep one!

ALBERT. A deep one if ever there was one.

SNIGGERS., There ain't any more, Bill, are there?

THE TOFF. No more in the world, my friend.

BILL. Ay, that's all there are. There were only three in the temple. Three priests and their beastly idol.

ALBERT. What is it worth, Toffy? Is it worth a thousand pounds?

THE TOFF. It's worth all they've got in the shop. Worth just whatever we like to ask for it.

ALBERT. Then we are millionaires now.

THE TOFF. Yes, and, what is more important, we no longer have any heirs.

BILL. We'll have to sell it now.

ALBERT. That won't be easy. It's a pity it

isn't small and we had half a dozen Hadn't the idol any other on him ?

BILL No, he was green jade all over and only had this one eye He had it in the middle of his forehead and was a long sight uglier than anything else in the world

SNIGGERS I'm sure we ought all to be very grateful to Toffy

BILL And, indeed, we ought

ALBERT If it hadn't been for him

BILL Yes, if it hadn't been for old Toffy

SNIGGERS He's a deep one

THE TOFF Well, you see I just have a knack of foreseeing things

SNIGGERS I should think you did

BILL Why, I don't suppose anything happens that our Toff doesn't foresee Does it, Toffy ?

THE TOFF Well, I don't think it does, Bill I don't think it often does

BILL Life is no more than just a game of cards to our old Toff

THE TOFF Well, we've taken these fellows' tricks

SNIGGERS [*going to the window*] It wouldn't do for anyone to see them

THE TOFF Oh, nobody will come this way We're all alone on a moor

BILL Where will we put them ?

THE TOFF Bury them in the cellar, but there's no hurry

BILL And what then, Toffy ?

THE TOFF Why, then we'll go to London and upset the ruby business We have really

come through this job very nicely.

BILL. I think the first thing that we ought to do is to give a little supper to old Toffy. We'll bury these fellows to-night.

ALBERT. Yes, let's.

SNIGGERS. The very thing!

BILL. And we'll all drink his health.

ALBERT. Good old Toffy!

SNIGGERS. He ought to have been a general or a premier. [*They get bottles from cupboard, etc.*]

THE TOFF. Well, we've earned our bit of a supper. [*They sit down.*]

BILL [*glass in hand*]. Here's to old Toffy, who guessed everything!

ALBERT and SNIGGERS. Good old Toffy!

BILL. Toffy, who saved our lives and made our fortunes.

ALBERT and SNIGGERS. Hear! Hear!

THE TOFF. And here's to Bill, who saved me twice to-night.

BILL. Couldn't have done it but for your cleverness, Toffy.

SNIGGERS. Hear, hear! Hear, hear!

ALBERT. He foresees everything.

BILL. A speech, Toffy. A speech from our general.

All. Yes, a speech.

SNIGGERS. A speech.

THE TOFF. Well, get me some water. This whisky's too much for my head, and I must keep it clear till our friends are safe in the cellar.

BILL. Water? Yes, of course. Get him

some water Sniggers

SNIGGERS We don't use water here  
Where shall I get it ?

BILL Outside in the garden [Exit Sniggers

ALBERT Here's to future !

BILL Here's to Albert Thomas, Esquire

ALBERT And William Jones, Esquire

*Re enter SNIGGERS, terrified*

THE TOFF Hullo, here's Jacob Smith,  
Esquire, J P, *alias* Sniggers, back again

SNIGGERS Toffy, I've been thinking about  
my share in that ruby I don't want it, Toffy,  
I don't want it

THE TOFF Nonsense, Sniggers Nonsense

SNIGGERS You shall have it, Toffy, you shall  
have it yourself, only say Sniggers has no share  
in this ere ruby Say it, Toffy, say it !

BILL Want to turn informer, Sniggers ?

SNIGGERS No, no Only I don't want the  
ruby, Toffy

THE TOFF No more nonsense, Sniggers  
We're all in together in this If one hangs, we  
all hang, but they won't outwit me Besides,  
it's not a hanging affair, they had their knives

SNIGGERS Toffy, Toffy, I always treated  
you fair, Toffy I was always one to say,  
'Give Toffy a chance' Take back my share,  
Toffy

THE TOFF What's the matter ? What are  
you driving at ?

SNIGGERS Take it back, Toffy

THE TOFF Answer me, what are you up to ?

SNIGGERS I don't want my share any more

BILL Have you seen the police ? [ALBERT

*pulls out his knife.*

THE TOFF. No, no knives, Albert.

ALBERT. What then ?

THE TOFF. The honest truth in open court, barring the ruby. We were attacked.

SNIGGERS. There's no police.

THE TOFF. Well, then, what's the matter ?

BILL. Out with it.

SNIGGERS. I swear to God....

ALBERT. Well?

THE TOFF. Don't interrupt.

SNIGGERS. I swear I saw something *what I didn't like.*

THE TOFF. What you didn't like ?

SNIGGERS [*in tears*]. Oh, Toffy, Toffy, take it back. Take my share. Say you take it.

THE TOFF. What has he seen !

[*Dead silence, only broken by SNIGGERS' sobs. Then steps are heard. Enter a hideous idol. It is blind and gropes its way. It gropes its way to the ruby and picks it up and screws it into a socket in the forehead. SNIGGERS still weeps softly, the rest stare in horror. The idol steps out, not groping. Its steps move off, then stop.*]

THE TOFF. O, great heavens !

ALBERT [*in a childish, plaintive voice*]. What is it, Toffy ?

BILL. Albert, it is that obscene idol [*in a whisper*] come from India.

ALBERT. It is gone.

BILL. It has taken its eye.

SNIGGERS. We are saved.

A VOICE OFF [*with outlandish accent*] Mees-  
taire William Jones, Able Seaman

[THE TOFF *has never spoken, never moved*

*He only gazes stupidly in horror*

BILL Albert, Albert, what is this? [*He rises and walks out* One moan is heard

SNIGGERS goes to the window *He falls back sickly*

ALBERT [*in a whisper*] What has happened?

SNIGGERS I have seen it I have seen it

Oh, I have seen it! [*He returns to table*

THE TOFF [*Laying his hand very gently on*

SNIGGERS arm, speaking softly and winningly]

What was it, Sniggers?

SNIGGERS I have seen it

ALBERT What?

SNIGGERS Oh!

VOICE Meestaire Albert Thomas, Able Seaman

ALBERT Must I go, Toffy? Toffy, must I go?

SNIGGERS [*clutching him*] Don't move

ALBERT [*going*] Toffy, Toffy [*Exit*

VOICE Meestaire Jacob Smith, Able Seaman

SNIGGERS I can't go, Toffy, I can't go, I can't do it [*He goes*

VOICE Meestaire Arnold Everett Scott-Fortescue, late Esquire, Able Seaman

THE TOFF I did not foresee it [*Exit*

CURTAIN

—Lord Dunsany

## RICHARD COBDEN

Some thirty years ago two young men were travelling on one of the old horse trams through the melancholy streets of Camden Town. "How just," said one of them, "was the instinct that prompted Cobden's friends to put up his statue on the doorstep of this district. Here, if anywhere, is Cobden's England: this drab, colourless, dingy squalor, with nothing to take a man's mind from the dreary business of making money." "It is odd," said the other, "that you should say this at this moment, for it was only yesterday that Morely remarked that there were three English statesmen who stood out in the nineteenth century as men of original and commanding views: two of them were Disraeli and Gladstone, the third was Cobden."

The great interest of Cobden's career is that, though the second of these views would be accepted to-day by all serious critics, all discriminating admirers would admit that the first is not wholly false. For while those who deplore Cobden's influence in English politics would have to admit that the state of Europe when he died shows that he was a man of remarkable power, those who admire his spirit and achievements will allow that it is not altogether a coincidence that a time when the Manchester School was drawing upon itself the eyes of the world, the streets of Manchester were so mean and miserable that a magistrate

of the Roman Empire in the days of Antomines would have been ashamed to call it his native city

The most dramatic and the most familiar way of looking at the domestic history of the first half of the nineteenth century is to regard it as an epic struggle between the landlords and the manufacturers, between the spirit of feudalism and the spirits of commerce Cobden, as a protagonist in that struggle, is regarded as a man of business In this there lurks a danger If we think of commerce to-day we think of offices and banks, of business men dictating to typists, of clerks making up ledgers, of a brisk but sedentary life spent in Manchester or London or some other great city Of course, all this life can be clothed with romance, if you picture these men and women moving in fancy from one continent to another, watching the rise and fall of prices at the ends of the world, thinking at one moment of coffee in Brazil, at another of rubber in the Malay Archipelago

But commerce in history has a more exciting aspect than this. The merchant in the Middle Ages did not merely visit the ends of the earth in imagination, he visited them in his caravan He was the man of action, the man of adventure. At home he had all the prestige and popularity of the traveller who can tell his neighbours what life is like somewhere else, how people keep themselves, what are their habits, their manners, their religion. Such a man was more like Herodotus than



Mr. Marshall or Mr. Snelgrove. He was more like Strabo than Mr. Swan or Mr. Edgar. He was the travelled man, the experienced man, the man of wide interests and outlook, for, like Odysseus, he had seen many men and many cities. And at a time when newspapers and newspaper readers were much less common, the traveller occupied a very important place in society. Man is always curious about man. To-day there is a new interest in archaeology just because we seem to have ransacked and to have standardized the whole world, and it is only by unburying the past that we can learn about peoples that differ from those with which we are familiar. That is why new light on Troy and Mycenae, which could take Gladstone's mind from his most pressing public cares in the first days of Schliemann's discoveries, stirs curiosity and excitement to-day in the man in the street. But a century ago that kind of curiosity was satisfied by travellers from Turkey or China or—

Golden cities, ten months' journeys deep  
Amid Tartarean hills.

To speak of Cobden as a business man, putting himself at the head of a business party, is misleading, unless we remember that he belonged to commerce in this special and romantic tradition. He was the most travelled man in the House of Commons. Nobody among his contemporaries had seen so much of the world, or talked to so many of its rulers and its merchants, its politicians and its peasants. He knew Europe in its diplomatic politics as

Stanhope knew it at the beginning of the eighteenth and Castlereagh at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, but he knew Europe also in its underlying passions and submerged desires, an aspect of which Stanhope and Castlereagh knew relatively little. To understand his power and his ideas, we must remember that he became a great leader, not because he was a business man, as we understand the term, but because, travelling in muslins, he could collect the wisdom that comes with experience to alert and observant minds. By nature an adventurous man, a man, that is, eager for a wide and various experience, he was always on the look out for the significance of the world which, at any given moment, he found himself observing.

If he had not possessed this quality he would never have overcome his early disadvantages. He was one of eleven children, born under the shadow of family disaster. He was educated by an uncle at a school in Yorkshire, where he remained for five years, "a grim and desolate time", "ill-fed, ill-taught, ill-used". His chance came when his uncle, who was in business, sent him to Ireland and Scotland as a commercial traveller. He made so good an impression that, although his uncle's firm came to grief in the financial storm of 1826, he was offered a partnership in a merchant's house. Seeing that the repeal of the heavy excise duties on calicoes would stimulate that industry, he turned calico printer. But though his business prospered for a time, it came to misfortune

later. This was not surprising. The ordinary business man spends his time making himself into a better business man: Cobden spent his time making himself into a politician. He worked hard at his own education. As a clerk in his uncle's warehouse he learned French; as a partner in a merchant's business in Manchester he studied Latin and mathematics. Like all reformers of his type, he read widely and eagerly. He became an admirable writer, and though the play he offered to the manager of Covent Garden as a young man did not deserve, Lord Morley tells us, more than the slight and slighting consideration that it received, his letters on his travels are agreeable reading, reflecting the play of a mind that soon finds itself at home in a new atmosphere, and settles down to look about and understand new and unfamiliar surroundings.

Thus Cobden was a calico printer in the sense that Grote was a banker. His fundamental interest was not in muslins and cottons, but in the men and women of the world. He resembled Marco Polo or Honas Hanway more than he resembled the Manchester merchants who helped him to repeal the Corn Laws. This came out clearly enough when his friends, rightly, thinking it a scandal that a man who had given to public causes the most persuasive tongue in England should suffer personal shipwreck from neglect of his affairs, came to his rescue as Fox's friends had come to the rescue of that noble spendthrift half a century earlier. Cobden, with a map of Illinois before him and a fortune

in his pocket, was about as good a business man as Fox when he sat down to the faro table at Brook's, fingering all that was left of his father's plunder. Cobden threw his fortune into the Mississippi with the generosity of a man whose imagination moves faster than the facts.

Cobden's optimism, his habit of letting his imagination outrun the facts, blinded him to the truth that if he lacked the business man's prudence, the business men whom he summoned to his banner lacked his large outlook. There was a wide and ultimately fatal difference between leader and led. This was plain from the outset of his career. The first thing Cobden did when he became a calico printer was to agitate for a village school, the first cause he took up was the cause of education. When he went into public life he meant to devote to this cause the incomparable gifts of persuasion which were ultimately given to the cause of Free Trade. But he was indifferently supported. Many of the business men in the North of England had the kind of self-satisfaction which is produced by success that has been gained in the face of great difficulties. Some of them were large minded enough to prize the education which they had missed, but most of them were doubtful whether the education which they had not found necessary for their own development was worth much public money or much public effort. Another difficulty was the extreme sectarian spirit of the times. Most Churchmen and most Nonconformists preferred that the towns should be left in ignorance if the alternative

was a form of education of which they disapproved. In this intolerant world of the few men such as Cobden and Hook, the great Vicar of Leeds, who put education first, believing, as Cobden said, that Cicero and Seneca had done greater service to humanity than the average gladiator or peasant of their time, although neither Churchman nor Nonconformist would have approved of their education, made little impression.

Another obstacle to the civilization of the new towns, as Dickens saw, was the Sunday imposed on the working classes, a Sunday in which the church or chapel and the public-house offered them their only escape from their dwellings in the slums. Every visitor from the Continent was astonished to find that beauty, fresh air, music, and reasonable recreation was kept out of the reach of the working classes on the only day on which they had leisure. We know what Cobden thought of this bleak barbarous institution from the letter he wrote in Germany. "If you think this is an improper picture of a Protestant Sunday," he wrote to his sister, "on the other hand, the sober and orderly German thinks that drunkenness, the filthy public-houses, the miserable and moping mechanic that pines in his dark alley in our English cities on the Sabbath day, are infinitely worse features of a Protestant community than his Tivoli Gardens." Here again there was a wide difference between leader and led.

Cobden was blind to this difference. His outlook was coloured and dominated by his

buoyant nature. He was an optimist, and his optimism resembled that of Macaulay both in its range and in its source. A century ago Macaulay, criticizing Southey's pessimism made a guess about the state of England in 1930.

If we were to prophesy," he said, "that in the year 1930 a population of fifty millions, better fed, clad, and lodged than the English of our time, will cover these islands, that Sussex and Huntingdonshire will be wealthier than the richest parts of the West Riding of Yorkshire now are, that cultivation, such as that of a flower garden, will be carried up to the very tops of Ben Nevis and Helvellyn, that machines constructed on principles undiscovered will be in every house, that there will be no highways but railroads, no travelling but by steam, that our debt, vast as it seems to us, will appear to our great grandchildren a trifling encumbrance which might easily be paid off in a year or two, many people would think us insane."

Macaulay went on to say that he would not prophesy, but he asked his readers to imagine how a person who had predicted the England of 1830 would have appeared to the Parliament which met in perplexity and terror after the South Sea Bubble crash of 1720. What would that Parliament have thought of a picture of England in which men would be in the habit of sailing without wind and beginning to ride without horses, and in which the annual revenue would equal the principal of the debt which that Parliament considered an intoler-

able burden ?

Cobden, as he moved about, felt towards all the new energy in the world as Macaulay felt. He was not one of those men who have no eyes for the life of the past. When he stood before the Parthenon he declared that his own age could not match such beauty of design or perfection of workmanship. Disraeli, speaking in the House of Commons after his death, said that reverence for the past was one of his distinguishing characteristics. But he found the vitality of his own age expressed and symbolized in this new power. He believed that the Industrial Revolution had done what the French Revolution had done, that it had shaken "the dead from living man". Looking at this world, he made in politics the same mistake that he made in business. He gambled on the virtues of a class. He thought that if you could put on one side all that belonged to the dead world, and throw power to the class that had come to life in this new world, England would be guided and governed by the energy of a new and generous public spirit. Cobden, in fact, was ready to stake everything on his belief that the British mill-owners and the British bankers and the British tradesmen would create a new city life recalling the city life of Italy or Flanders in the great days of Michelangelo or Rembrandt.

Unfortunately, large numbers of the new class resembled Charlotte Brontë's neighbours, as described by Mrs. Gaskell :

Men with hundreds of thousands of pounds who bring up their sons only just enough learn-

ing to qualify them for overseers during their father's lifetime and greedy, grasping money-hunters after his death

These gentlemen, it will be remembered, defeated the efforts of Charlotte Brontë's father to obtain a water-supply for Haworth, and Cobden was expecting them to emulate the magnificence of Cosmo de 'Medici. Those who formed larger views for their families did not always form larger views for their towns. Cobden lived to deplore the haste with which business men who made fortunes turned themselves into country gentlemen, neglecting the claims of their city life. He was let down by the merchant princes as Disraeli was let down by the landlords. Disraeli, looking for a Herodes Atticus among the landlords, who grew fabulously richer with every new smudge on the face of Lancashire, found his followers voting steadily against Bills for Public Health, abandoned his mission in despair for twenty years, and gave his brains to the tactics of his party.

When we look from England to the world, Cobden's place in history becomes clearer. That strong sense for the unity of civilization for which we look in the world of science and culture, struggles against special obstacles in the world of politics, for politicians have to manage the mixed passions of class and nation, of religion and race. Those obstacles grew more difficult in the nineteenth century as popular feeling and national sentiment became stronger forces.

The sense for the unity of the world which



had inspired the mystical poetry of the thirteenth century dominated the cold prose of the eighteenth century, revealing itself in the *Decline and fall of the Roman Empire* and *The Wealth of Nations*. Cobden had learned from Adam Smith to look upon commerce in this relation. He saw, as he surveyed its history, that the discoveries of Columbus and the other great mariners had been followed by two centuries of struggle, and that the passionate desire for the new wealth of the world had turned the Atlantic into as lawless a sea as the Mediterranean in savage days of Mithridates. To the ordinary business man this was idle history. He was for British commerce. If commerce flourished by peace, he was for peace, if by war, he was for war. To Cobden that past was a haunting shadow. For the things to which many of those who followed him were indifferent were just the things that mattered to him above everything else. Just as in education and religious tolerance, so in commerce he moved in a world beyond their understanding. The discovery that guided and governed Cobden's mind was a truth too important for anybody who had grasped it to give it half-hearted service. The British people, as the pioneers of the Industrial Revolution, had created an economy which made the whole world one. In such a world strife must be more disastrous than in a world where nations still lived on their own resources. It must also be more frequent, for just as the penalties of defeat would be more severe, so would the prizes of victory seem more tempting.

While many of his followers were merely thinking of free trade as a means of adding to Britain's commerce and riches, Cobden's mind was brooding on this prospect. He called on the British people to help the world out of this danger by renouncing monopoly, by throwing open its markets, declaring that the British Empire welcomed anybody who wanted to trade with it. In this way he hoped to save the world from repeating the crimes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from opening up the undeveloped parts of the world by violence and wrong, from nursing a sense of property that would be too strong, in case of conflict, for the sense of justice. In this sense he was well described in Carlyle's famous phrase, "an inspired bagman with a calico millennium". For these words might be taken to mean that he was a traveller who had seen men and cities, with a mind lighted by genius, teaching a faith and doctrine that could deliver calico itself from the crimes that had stained the pirate seas.

Some who agree with Cobden's aim would argue that his plan for bringing the world to Free Trade was not the best plan. Some, again, would hold that it was dangerous to expect other peoples to draw from Britain's success under Free Trade the conclusions drawn by Cobden's converts among the British manufacturers and cotton spinners. Free Trade, again, occupied in Cobden's analysis an importance that most people to day would think excessive. Too much was expected of it. Few people would hold that Universal Free Trade gives the

answer to all the economic problems of a world that has become a single economic unit.

All these considerations could be urged in criticism of Cobden's statesmanship and foresight. But they do not touch his position as an intellectual and moral power in Europe in the nineteenth century. He stands out as a man acting consistently on a large view of politics. He brought his own nation to accept his conclusions, and he almost brought the world to accept them. These conclusions, though most persons would consider them a less complete answer than he supposed to the international problem set by the Industrial Revolution, were based on a fundamental truth. The world was moving towards a new unity, with opportunities and dangers greater than it has ever known in its history. For the Industrial Revolution had created an elaborate world order, based on a system of exchange which was gradually drawing all peoples into a single plan of life. Cobden saw that every civilized people had a new duty to its neighbours under this system and that this duty was specially binding on the people now enjoying the kind of ascendancy that had belonged at one time to Venice and Genoa, at another to the Portuguese and the Dutch. He asked of his nation that it should look beyond its own immediate desire and use this power in a spirit of generosity and forbearance. We need not turn back to distant centuries or search the civilizations of the past, recalling Isocrates and Cicero, Epaminondas and Scipio Africanus, to determine whether a man who

brings this wider wisdom into the violent atmosphere of politics deserves to live in history. All observers are agreed in tracing the confusion of the world to day to the want of this guiding sense, in the hour when victory had put the fortunes of Europe in the hands of a dozen politicians, trembling before popular passions, so lately their servants and now their masters. If mankind could summon the dead to its rescue, the two Englishmen to whom it would first turn in its distress are the men who, learning from different prophets, tried to teach their age this larger sympathy.

—J L Hammond

# SURENDRANATH BANERJEA

## VISIT TO ENGLAND IN 1909

Early in 1909, I was invited to attend the Imperial Press Conference which was to meet in London in the June following. It was to be a gathering of the representatives of the Press throughout the Empire. I was the only member of the Indian (as distinguished from the Anglo-Indian) Press who was asked to join the Conference. The invitation was made by Mr. Lovat Fraser, formerly of the *Times of India*, and at the time on the staff of the *Times*. It was an honour done to me, and I felt it as such; but there were difficulties in my way. The administration of the Ripon College was then being organized under the new University Regulations. The College had just passed through a serious crisis in connexion with the affiliation of its Law Department. There was a time when it seemed as if the Law Department, which was the largest in Bengal, would be disaffiliated. Thanks, however, to the powerful intervention of Sir Edward Baker, and the readiness of the college authorities to comply with the requirements of the University, these difficulties were overcome; and, while every law college in Bengal, with the exception of less than half a dozen, was disaffiliated, the Law Department of the Ripon College was allowed to retain its status and position.

We were not, however, quite out of the wood yet, and I sought the advice of Sir Edward Baker. He advised me to accept the invitation, assuring me that during my absence no harm would come to the college. A similar assurance was given to me by the Vice-Chancellor, Sir Ashutosh Mukherjea, who then ruled the University with undisputed sway. I had thus the satisfaction of feeling pretty sure, before I left for England, that the Law Department would be safe. For, at a meeting of the Syndicate to which I was invited, I discussed the constitution of the college with the members of the Syndicate, and everything was satisfactorily settled. I was thus enabled to leave for England about the middle of May, free from the anxieties which my absence from India would otherwise have caused.

My lot in life made me a great traveller, but I never liked the idea of leaving home for a distant journey. The comforts and associations of home always possessed an overwhelming fascination for me. In 1897, when I went to England to give evidence before the Welby Commission, I begged Lord Welby, the President of the commission, to dismiss me as early as possible. He very courteously complied with my request, and I hurried back to India, although my colleagues stayed on for the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, which was to take place in a few weeks' time. Pageants and shows never possessed any attraction for me, and I was glad to get back to my home and my work.

I left home on May 15, and arrived in London on June 3. It was nearly midnight when the train steamed into Victoria Station and my old and esteemed friend, Mr. H.E.A. Cotton, was on the platform waiting for me with a motor ready to take me to the Waldorf Hotel, where the Press delegates were accommodated. He would not leave me till he saw me comfortably lodged in my room.

And here a word about Mr. Cotton. Mr. Cotton is now President of the Bengal Legislative Council, the duties of which, under existing conditions, have become anxious and troublesome, but which he is conducting, according to all accounts, with ability, tact and firmness that have won him praise and admiration. His experience as a member of the House of Commons and his familiarity with English public life have been a valuable help to him in the performance of his present arduous task, and when, on the death of Nawab Sir Shamsul Huda, late President of the Bengal Legislative Council, Mr. Cotton was suggested as his successor, I warmly supported the proposal. His father and myself had been friends for a period of over forty years, and in my public life, I received valuable advice and guidance from him. After his retirement from India in the early nineties of the last century, we used to correspond every week on questions of public importance.

The first function of the Press Conference took place on the following evening, when Lord Burnham, proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*, a venerable old man of eighty, but still retaining

something of the fire and the fervour of early life, and Lord Rosebery, the greatest of living English orators welcomed us in suitable speeches at a great banquet given in honour of the Press delegates. I sat at table with Mr Nevson and Mr Gardiner of the *Daily News*, and altogether it was a most enjoyable function.

Our deliberations commenced almost immediately. The first meeting of the Conference was held on June 7, and the subject discussed was the reduction of cable rates. A resolution declaring that facilities for telegraphic communication should be cheapened and improved was adopted, and a committee was appointed. Dr (now Sir) Stanley Reed proposed the committee, and it was unanimously carried. I supported the resolution, on the ground that accurate news regarding the situation in India, especially in view of the developments that were then taking place, should be readily available to the British public, and cheap cable rates would materially promote that object.

At the second day's sitting the subject discussed was the Press and the Empire. Mr. McKenna, First Lord of the Admiralty, presided. The debate turned mainly upon the question of naval defence. I made up my mind to leave the Conference, as I had a meeting of the British Committee of the Congress to attend, when quite unexpectedly and without any occasion for it, Lord Cromer threw out a challenge, addressed almost personally to me, asking whether the anarchical developments which had then taken place were not helped by the irrespon-



sible utterances of a certain section of the Indian Press. I heard the challenge with regret and astonishment. It seemed to be so utterly irrelevant; but for me there was no escape. The invitation was almost of a personal kind, for I was the only representative of the Indian section of the Press; and to keep quiet and say nothing would be to acquiesce in the insinuation. I made up my mind to reply; I collected my thoughts and sent up my name to the Chairman as one who intended to speak. I was called to the table at once. It was a short speech and I give the full text of it:—

“I am sorry to interpose with any remarks which may appear to be somewhat irrelevant to considerations which are now before the Conference, but Lord Cromer has extended to us an invitation—I will not call it a challenge—that we should say whether in our opinion the anarchical developments which have recently taken place in Bengal are due to the irresponsible utterances of a certain section of the Indian Press. To this question my answer is an absolute, an unqualified, and an emphatic ‘No’. (Hear, hear, and a voice, ‘Bravo’). I am not here to defend everything that has been said in the Indian Native Press. I ask my brother journalists here from other parts of the Empire if they are prepared to defend everything said in their columns about questions of great public importance. Are we an infallible body? We are not. We are liable to make mistakes, and sometimes very serious mistakes. I shall, therefore, say at once that I am not

going to defend the irresponsible utterances, which unfortunately, have now and then found a place in some of the Indian newspapers, but it must be remembered that those newspapers form an insignificant minority—(hear, hear)—their circulation is limited, and their hold upon public opinion feeble. Let there be no misconception about my attitude. I do not stand here in justification of those anarchical developments which have unfortunately taken place in Bengal. I express the sense of the better mind of Bengal, and, I may add, of all India, when I say that we all deplore those anarchical incidents. (Cheers) My Indian colleagues and myself have condemned them in our columns with the utmost emphasis that we could command. They are in entire conflict with those deep seated religious convictions which colour, consciously or unconsciously, the everyday lives of our people. Anarchism, if I may say so without offence, is not of the East but of the West. It is a noxious growth which has been transplanted from the West, and we hope that under the conciliatory and ameliorating treatment of Lord Morley it will soon disappear from the land. I feel tempted to enter into those considerations which have brought about these unhappy developments but I remember that this is a non political gathering, I will, therefore, resist the temptation, and exercise the self restraint of the East. (Loud cheers) We regard a free Press as one of the greatest boons that have been conferred upon us under British rule. It was conferred upon us not

merely for Political purposes, but as an instrument for the dissemination of knowledge and useful information. At any rate, that was the hope, the aim and the aspiration of the great liberator of Indian Press. Lord Metcalfe, speaking in reply to a deputation that waited upon him in connexion with the emancipation of the Indian Press, said: 'We are not here in India merely to maintain order, to collect the taxes and make good the deficit; we are here for a higher and nobler purpose, to pour into the East the knowledge, the culture, and the civilization of the West.' I claim on behalf of my countrymen that they have used this gift for the benefit of the Government, and to the advantage of the people, and I pray that it may long endure to the mutual credit of England and India alike." (Cheers).

It is not for me to speak of the effect that the speech produced upon the meeting. When I said that I would not enter into a political controversy, but would exercise the self-restraint of the East, the House came down with uproarious applause. Sir Hugh Graham, the doyen of the Canadian Press, who was present at the Conference, said to me afterwards that it was a 'model of a debating speech'. Another member of the Press Conference remarked that 'Mr. Banerjea wiped the floor with Lord Cromer.' It was generally felt that the retort was merited and I was glad that I had the opportunity of vindicating the Indian Press before the assembled journalists of the Empire.

Every day we had business meetings supple-

mented by parties. It was one continuous round of work, enlivened by festivities. The English are not a demonstrative people, but they are truly hospitable, and they show their cordiality to their guests in ways that are not to be mistaken. At Sheffield every one of us was presented with a knife, the kind of work for which Sheffield is noted, and at Dempster, after we had inspected the motor works, we were asked to take with us a handsome pocket-book as a souvenir of our visit. At the dinner and luncheon tables the talk was frank, cordial, and free from reserve and restraint. At the luncheon given to us at All Souls' College, Oxford, the Regius Professor of Greek of the University (Professor Gilbert Murray), who was sitting next to me, said of Lord Curzon, who presided and spoke, "Here is a man who could set off the most trifling commonplaces in the most superb ornaments of language."

Visiting England after twelve years I could not help noticing some of the changes that had taken place. One thing that struck me was that both teetotalism and vegetarianism were making headway, and, what was still more remarkable, as in the case of all social movements, their indirect influence upon the consumption of meat and alcohol was appreciable. But let me proceed with my narrative.

On the fourth day of the Conference Lord Miley was in the chair, and the subject of discussion was "Journalism and Literature." I spoke at that meeting, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., who followed me, paid me a high compli-

ment. I think it was Lord Morley who at that Conference described Literature as an art, and Journalism as an industry. We were invited to Aldershot and witnessed a review of fourteen thousand troops. I was here introduced to Lord Haldane, who was then Secretary of State for War and had come down from London to receive the Press delegates. I had a short conversation with him in which I referred to the Partition and the great grievance it was to the people of Bengal. He heard me out and finished by saying, 'Why doesn't Morley upset it?' That indeed was the feeling of every English politician of any note whom I met in the course of this visit.

I returned home with the impression that no public man who had any influence in the country liked the Partition, they were all against it, and that if we persevered it was bound to be upset. I saw Lord Courtney, who was a great friend of Lord Morley, and Mr. Winston Churchill in company with Mr. Mackarness, that staunch and redoubtable friend whose service to India at a critical time we have not sufficiently acknowledged. The impression left on my mind was that they were convinced that we had a great grievance and both promised to speak to Lord Morley. At Manchester I had an interview with Mr. C. P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*. His sympathies were all with us. I pressed him to write in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian*, but his difficulty was that Lord Morley was a Liberal leader, and above all a Lancashire man.

Our work in London being over, we started on our provincial tour on June 14. We went by special train to Coventry, where we inspected the motor works to which I have already referred and then we proceeded by motor to Warwick Castle where we were entertained at lunch by the Earl and Countess of Warwick. The Countess welcomed us in a fine speech, ringing with the inspiration that belongs to the old castle, so full of the stirring traditions associated with the name and fame of the great King maker. She reminded us that, where we sat and had our lunch equipped with the arms and the military emblems of the middle ages, was the hall in which the Barons deliberated and from where they sallied forth on their military expeditions under the leadership of the King maker.

As I write these lines in my quiet residence in the suburbs of Ranchi, amid the deathlike stillness of a summer afternoon I recall with vividness the sonorous strains of her something more than womanly voice, repeating the glories of the Warwick family, in a speech that left little or nothing to be wished for, in point of force or dignity of expression. The picturesque situation of the castle, overlooking a wide tract of woody country, almost forest like in the beauty of its landscape, deepened the impression of medieval times, and of medieval strife and conflict, which the speech awakened.

From Warwick Castle we motored to Oxford, stopping at Stratford on Avon and alighting in front of Shakespeare's house. We entered it as a place of pilgrimage. I had seen the

house and its memorials, the room where Shakespeare was born, the inscriptions of Dickens and of Byron some forty years back, in 1871, while I was yet a student in London. I saw nothing new except that an oil-painting of Shakespeare had been added; and that the birthplace of the great dramatist now possessed a Shakespeare Theatre, which did not exist forty years before. At the house itself we were welcomed by the Mayor in his robes of office, and one of our delegates made a reply. All this did not take more than ten minutes, and the function was performed in the little garden attached to the house.

.. How mindful the English people are of the memories of their great dead ! In his own lifetime Shakespeare was not the towering and immortal figure that he now is—and even a prophet is not always honoured among his own people,—yet how scrupulously and reverentially the memorials of Shakespeare were preserved by his contemporaries. How different is all this in India ! We worship our gods of clay and stone in the firm faith that the Divine Spirit dwells therein; but the living gods who move about us and amongst us, doing, daring, dying for the country, are nowhere in our estimation. We persecute them when necessary for our own ends, and we invoke the holy name of religion and love of country to conceal our spite. The great Ram Mohun Roy was out-casted by our ancestors; and it was only when death had obliterated personal jealousies and bitterness, and when we could view the Raja

and his work in the cool, colourless atmosphere of reason and solid achievement, that we realized his worth and hastened to raise a memorial in his honour in the place of his birth. A nation that does not know how to honour its heroes does not deserve to have them and will not have them.

From Shakespeare's birthplace we hurried on to Oxford in the dim and disappearing twilight. The country around, nature and men, were preparing for the welcome rest of the night. We too felt tired, despite the varied enjoyments of the day, and as I entered my room in the hotel, I felt that I had done a good day's work and had earned my rest. Our programme for the following day was cut and dried. It had all been arranged beforehand. I never saw an abler or more effective organizer than Sir Harry Brittain, who was looking after us and was our guide, philosopher and friend. Ceaseless in his work by day and night, no one could perceive on his placid and immobile countenance the faintest trace of strain or worry. He organized the Conference. The conception was his. The execution was also his. He sketched out its programme, and he carried it through with an ability and devotion, tempered with a never failing geniality which made him the most attractive personality in that historic gathering of the journalists of the Empire. It is now several years since we met, but the memory of his kindness and readiness to serve must remain imprinted on the minds of the members of the Conference.



Our programme, as I have said, was ready, and we set to work. We began the day with a visit to New College, which was almost opposite our hotel. We inspected the college building, almost every nook and corner of it, the lecture-rooms, the common-room, the smoking-room, and even the wine-cellar. To an Indian educationist like myself, bred in the puritanic ideas of our education system, I confess the sight of the smoking-room and the wine-cellar gave a shock. No Indian educational institution or hostel has either of these appurtenances. Smoking among our students we dislike and discourage, and drinking among them, even in moderation, we abhor. There may perhaps be nothing immoral, the feeling is perhaps not based upon reasoned judgement, but our educational ideas have their roots in the Brahminical system of old, which was rigidly austere in its character and ascetic in its complexion, and in its outlook upon men and affairs. Poverty, purity, total contempt of worldly luxuries, are the basal ideas which built up the ancient educational system of India, and moulded its culture and civilization. The Brahmin has an instinctive dislike of both smoking and drinking, though sometimes, in imitating the failings of a civilization not his own, he takes to both.

I have throughout my life been a non-smoker. Often my friend, the late Mr. Turnbull, one of the most genial of men, pressed me to have a smoke with him, without success. At last he had recourse to a dodge. He made me

a present of a fine cigarette-holder which he had purchased at the Paris Exhibition. I could not refuse the gift, coming from a friend so kind and so courteous. Equipped with this beautiful cigarette-holder, I took to smoking. But the practice was short-lived. It lasted for three or four days. I could endure it no longer. I felt the stench through every pore of my body. I put away the cigarette holder then and for ever, and I felt greatly relieved when I learnt that a thievish servant of mine had stolen it.

At Oxford we were treated to a luncheon in the Library of All Souls' College. Lord Curzon, as Chancellor of the University, received us in the garden of the College, and afterwards presided and spoke at the lunch. There was nothing very striking in the function or in the speech. From Oxford we proceeded to Sheffield, where we were entertained by the Mayor, and were taken round the works of Messrs Vickers, Maxim & Co., the world famous manufacturers of arms. To me, and, I imagine, to most of the delegates, it was a bewildering sight. We gazed, we wondered—that was all. At Sheffield the suggestion was made that I should speak. I demurred, and preferred to hold myself in reserve for Manchester. I think I was right in this decision.

We arrived at Manchester on June 18. At the entrance to my hotel there were my Indian friends headed by Mr Dube, a resident of Northern India, to welcome me. They garlanded me and decked me with flowers, while some of my colleagues of the Press Conference looked with

no little curiosity on this novel sight. Among the spectators was Mr. Mackenzie, the correspondent of the *Daily Mail*. As I noticed him I said, "This is what you called my coronation in the *Daily Mail*. This is what is usually done every day to honoured friends in India." He laughed; and I entered the hotel, making over my flowery appendages to Sir Harry Brittain for presentation to Lady Brittain.

At Manchester I was selected to speak at a luncheon at the Town Hall presided over by the Lord Mayor. The Lord Mayor proposed the toast of "The Imperial Press", coupling it with my name. I have taken the liberty of printing this speech in an appendix because in that speech I tried to voice, as effectively as I could, our aspirations for self-government as "the cement of the Empire", the strongest guarantee of Imperial unity, and the most powerful bulwark against the machinations of the enemies of England. We are now within measurable distance of the fulfilment of that for which I then ventured to plead. For the beginnings of responsible government have been inaugurated, which I hope, notwithstanding the clouds that now darkly frown, will, in the fullness of time, make India an equal partner in the British Commonwealth. In the last sentence of my peroration, I said:—

"India in the enjoyment of the blessings of self-government, India prosperous, contented and happy, will be the most valuable asset of the Empire, the strongest bulwark of Imperial unity. And the Empire, thus knit together

upon the basis of common civic rights and obligations, may bid defiance to the most powerful combination that may be formed against it, and may gaze with serenity and confidence upon those vicissitudes which, as all history tells us, have wrecked the fortunes of States and thrones which relied upon the security of physical rather than upon the paramountcy of those moral laws which represent the index-finger of Divine Providence in the dispensation of human affairs

This was said in 1909, and when in 1914 we stood face to face with the most formidable combination that had ever been formed against the Empire, our rulers discovered that in a prosperous and contented India, secured by the inauguration of responsible government, lay one of the strongest guarantees of Imperial unity and strength. If the truth had been earlier recognized and practised, our man-power and money power would have been even more freely available in the service of the Empire.

The speech was received with warmth and even enthusiasm by the audience, and a Press delegate sitting next to me said as I resumed my seat, "If there are two hundred men like you in India, Mr Banerjea, self-government ought to be granted to-morrow." I said, "There are twice two hundred men like me in India." The function being over, as I was leaving the hall, the caretaker came up to me and said, "Will you, sir, write down your name in this book?" And as I was writing he said to me, "Sir, let me tell you this, that such a speech has

not been delivered in this hall since it was built." It may have been the language of high-pitched admiration, but it certainly represented the feelings of the man, for he spoke with evident warmth and sincerity.

The Manchester Press, whose representatives were all present at the function, wrote in appreciative terms. The *Manchester Courier*, an organ of Conservative opinion and not always very friendly to Indian aspirations, said of the speech: "It was the most dramatic incident of the Press delegates' visit to Manchester.... On the Manchester citizens whom the Lord Mayor had invited to meet the guests, the effect of the speech was almost electrical. To find themselves addressed in their own language by a native of India with a fluency that must have been the envy of all present, and with the impassioned utterance that only a born orator can attain, was an experience that happens only once in a lifetime."

I left Manchester almost immediately after the function as I had to attend a dinner party in London at the house of Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Byles, M.P. I arrived late for the dinner; but it was a pleasure to have made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Byles—such good friends of India were they. The Press delegates returned to London the same day and on June 19 we were at Windsor Castle to witness the presentation of colours to the Territorials by His Majesty the King. On the terrace where we were stationed I met Mr. Ameer Ali. There was a bleak, cold, east wind

blowing, and Mr Ameer Ali who was dressed in Windsor uniform with the badge of a Companion of the Indian Empire on his breast, was almost shivering with cold. His first words on approaching me were 'You are very wise, Mr Banerjea to have put on that overcoat.' I said to him 'I never part with it if I can help it in the fickle and changeable climate of England.' My absolute immunity from colds and coughs during my stay of over two months in England was evidence that I acted wisely. On one occasion when I had gone on a visit to Lord Middleton (Mr Brodrick, who, as Secretary of State had sanctioned the Partition of Bengal), his lordship came up with me to open the door. He looked hard at my overcoat, which he helped me to put on. I noted the significance of his look, and I said, "My Lord, your climate is fickle and treacherous, and, though it is a bright day, I thought there was no harm in being extra cautious." Lord Middleton laughed approvingly and closed the door after me.

The visit to Windsor was followed by a deputation that waited upon Mr Asquith on the question of cable rates. I was a member of the Deputation. There were the usual speeches, but Mr Asquith gave no pledge of any kind. This was the last function at which I was present as a member of the Press Conference.

## NOTES

### ON MISUNDERSTANDING

**G. K. Chesterton**—(1874—1936) a humorist, a philosopher, a literary man rolled all in one, G. K. Chesterton is one of the finest essayists, critics and writers of the novels of fantasy. There is an ease and refinement about his essays, which form almost their unique quality. He glides from humour to reflection in an almost imperceptible manner, and this is a fine quality of the present essay, "On Misunderstanding".

**Animal assimilation**—digestion of food.

**Dr. Johnson**—one of the greatest men of letters of the eighteenth century.

**Charles Lamb**—a great essayist of the nineteenth century.

**Iliad**—an epic poem written by Homer.

**Solo**—song or musical piece given by one person or instrument.

**Diogenes**—an ancient Greek philosopher, who lived in a tub.

**St. Jerome**—a Christian saint.

### THE GREAT STRIKE

**E. V. Knox**—"Evoe" or E. V. Knox is another celebrated modern essayist. His style, like that of Hillaire Belloc, is characterized by the grace of ease and spontaneity. "The Great Strike" was a serious economic crisis in England. But how delightfully charming is "Evoe's" account of that very catastrophe! It is the author's personal approach to a subject which is the most important thing in an essay. "Evoe's" personal approach is that of a thoughtful humorist.

**Melodramatically**—in a theatrical way suggestive of exaggerated emotion.

**Adamant**—firm.

**B.B.C.**—British Broadcasting Corporation.

**Napoleonic figure**—looking pale and small like Napoleon

## THE MOST CURIOUS ANIMAL

**Robert Lynd**—(b 1879) one of the celebrated essayists of the modern times. In his style and development of ideas he bears comparison with R L Stevenson and E V Lucas. Like Lucas he can develop almost a whole essay out of nothing. But it does not mean that what he writes is airy nothing. His writings are pregnant with weighty ideas. His style has the grace and beauty of the style of R L Stevenson minus his mannerisms. It has an ease about it which is one of its delightful charms. Robert Lynd's essays present a happy combination of seriousness of thought and ease of expression.

**Bluebeard**—popular story of a man who hung up in a locked chamber the bodies of his murdered wives.

**Pandora legend**—the Greek story of a girl in whose house was placed the box which contained desires and diseases.

**Dogma**—a fixed teaching which must be accepted without reasoning.

**Galileo**—an Italian professor, who invented the telescope.

**Montaigne**—a French noble, who wrote "essay" for the first time.

**Boswell**—a friend and biographer of Dr Johnson, the famous literary figure of the eighteenth century.

## ON THE PLEASURE OF TAKING UP ONE'S PEN

**Hillaire Belloc**—one of the most celebrated essayists of our times. Like G K Chesterton, Belloc, too, is a fine humorist. His essays are characterized by an ease of expression, which is a remarkable quality of his style. The charm of the essay is the charm of the author's personality, and as one reads the essays of Hillaire Belloc one realizes that his is the personality which has viewed the world and its objects with a unique interest. It is not the subject matter but the author's approach to it which matters in an essay. Hillaire Belloc can invest



with grace and charm even the most insignificant object he writes an essay upon. In the present essay he says almost nothing in particular, and yet it makes an exquisitely delightful reading.

**Dr. Johnson**—(1709—1784) the most distinguished man of letters of the 18th century. He was a celebrated writer of English prose and a great literary critic of his time.

**G.W.R.**—Great Western Railway, one of the important railways of Britain.

**Paddington**—a railway station.

**Charlemagne**—(742—814) Emperor of the Franks. He and his Knights are celebrated in many legends and romances.

**Allegro**—a famous poem of Milton in which the writer invokes the spirit of Mirth.

## STUDENT DAYS

**Storm Jameson**—(b. 1896) Margaret Storm Jameson is a celebrated writer of our times. She was born at Whitley, where her family still lives on Chubb Hill. She graduated from the University of Leeds with honours and a research scholarship which she used in London studying drama for her M.A. thesis. Her thesis was published under the title of "*The Modern Drama in Europe*", and became very popular in England and America. She has married Guy Chapman, and is associated with him in the English office of Alfred Knopf, publisher.

**The New Machiavelli**—a novel written by H. G. Wells.

**Anatole France**—a celebrated French novelist.

**Cezanne**—a famous modern painter.

**Burgundy**—a kind of red wine.

**Muffin**—a light fat round spongy cake.

## THE GREAT CRASH OF 1929

**H. G. Wells**—(1866—1946) one of the greatest thinker and writers of our age. Wells was a very prolific writer and has written, besides novels and short stories, books

on Economics Politics and Sociology In the present piece Wells discusses the effect of the Wall Street crash of 1929 on the economic condition of the world

**Rapprochement**—re establishment of harmonious relations

**Trotsky and Stalin**—both were leaders of the communist revolution of Russia

**Bolsheviks**—Russian communists

**Tariff wall**—the barrier imposed on the import of foreign goods for the protection of national industries

**Reparations**—compensation for war damages

**Civil disobedience**—Satyagraha movement of Mahatma Gandhi for the freedom of India

**Axis**—the alliance of Hitler and Mussolini

## THE RISE OF CAPITALISM

**J Ramsay MacDonald**—a leader of the Labour Party and one of the Prime Ministers of Britain He was a statesman an orator and a writer His writings reveal his socialistic views and are characterized by clarity of thought and expression

**Aristocracy**—the class of nobility

**Plutocratic class**—Plutocracy is rule by the wealthy Plutocratic class is the class of such wealthy rulers

**Statistics**—numerical facts systematically collected

**Free Trade system**—a system of international trade without any tariff duties

**Joint Stock Company**—a business concern whose capital is subscribed by many shareholders

## THE PROBLEM OF EQUALITY

**G D H Cole**—(b 1889) he was educated at St Paul's School and Balliol College Oxford He is University Reader in Economics at Oxford Vice President Workers Educational Association and Vice Chairman, Society for Socialist Enquiry and Propaganda He has written numerous books on Political and Economic subjects and also many detective novels

**Universal suffrage**—the right of voting extended to all adults.

**"Bottom dogs"**—poor persons.

**Feudalism**—the system in mediaeval Europe under which land belonged to the aristocracy.

**"Poor fish"**—cowards and mean-spirited fellows.

## PLANNING IN THE DEMOCRATIC STATE

**Sir Ernest Barker**—Honorary Fellow of Meston College, Oxford and Peterhouse, Cambridge. He is an authority on problems of government and constitution. It can well be said that the study of Politics in modern times will not be complete without reading his views. He is a man of prodigious scholarship and of wide and deep understanding. His style is characterized by ease and lucidity. The present piece is taken from his valuable book "Reflections on Government". In it he discusses the problem of planning, and tells us how far it is a responsibility of the state in a democratic country. Planning has come to acquire great importance in our present day economic organization. Barker's views on planning are very original.

**Auxiliaries**—helps.

**Unfettered discretion**—free choice.

**Collaboration**—working together.

**Ulterior**—not immediate; in the future.

**Idolization**—treating with very great respect.

**Schematized**—outlined.

## PRODUCTION, THE FIRST ESSENTIAL

**Jawaharlal Nehru**—(b. 1889) writer, statesman and Prime Minister of India, Nehru needs no introduction to Indian students. He was educated at Harrow and Cambridge. After completing his education in England he returned to India and like his father, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, started the practice of law. But his sphere of work was not destined to be law, but the much wider field of politics. He came in contact with Mahatma Gandhi, and joined India's non-violent fight for freedom.

under the influence of classical models in 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries.

**Dr. Whitehead**—celebrated writer of our modern times.

## THE PROGRESS OF ASTRONOMY

**Sir James Jeans**—a great scientific scholar and a very well known writer on Astronomy. His attitude towards his subject is tolerant, patient and elucidatory. He is scholarly yet non-pedantic. He writes in a simple style, and has the power of investing his writings with a unique charm on account of which he is never dull. The present piece is taken from his book, "The Universe Around Us".

**Orifice**—opening.

**Pythagoras**—a teacher and philosopher of ancient Greece.

**Jupiter, Venus, and Mercury**—planets in the sky.

**Cataclysm**—upheaval.

**Cleopatra's needle**—Egyptian obelisk on the embankment of the Thames.

**Mont Blanc**—the highest peak in the Alps.

## THE BOY COMES HOME

**A. A. Milne**—a celebrated modern dramatist of Britain. He began his career as a journalist and became an assistant-editor of the *Punch* at the age of 24. When the Great War broke out in 1914 he entered the army. During his leisure hours in the army he wrote plays. He started his career as a playwright with One-act plays, but he has also written longer plays on which his reputation rests. Chief among his longer plays are, 'Mr. Pim Passes By', 'The Dover Road' and 'Michael and Mary'. Besides plays he has also written poems, novels and essays.

**Cosy**—comfortable.

**Aggressive**—offensive.

**Truculently**—in an aggressive manner.

**Detonator**—a part of bomb or shell which causes explosion.

# A NIGHT AT AN INN

**Lord Dunsany**—(b. 1878) a celebrated playwright and writer of short stories. Though Irish by birth he is English by idiom. He has published no less than fifteen volumes of short stories and quite a large number of plays. His writings are highly fanciful, and in them he often takes us to a strange realm of wonder and mystery, horror and weirdness. In the present play he develops gradually an atmosphere of horror and mystery.

**Toff**—a distinguished person

**Pub**—public house

**Niggers**—negroes loosely used for any dark-skinned person

**Perspicuous**—easily understood

**Outlandish**—sounding foreign

## RICHARD COBDEN

**J. L. Hammond**—(b. 1872) a distinguished journalist and author of our times. His important publications are 'Charles, James Fox', 'The Village Labourer' and 'The Town Labourer'.

**Morley**—John Viscount Morley (1838—1923), a celebrated historian and scholar.

**The Manchester School**—the school of economists which supported the free trade policy. The leaders of that school were Cobden and Bright.

**Antonines**—two Roman emperors, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

**Herodotus**—(484—424 B.C.) a Greek historian.

**Odysseus**—Ulysses, whose adventures are given in Homer's *Odyssey*.

**Schliemann**—(1822—1890) a German archaeologist who excavated Troy.

**Golden cities etc**—lines taken from Wordsworth's poem *Prelude*.

**Stanhope**—(1694—1773) a celebrated British politician.

**Castlereagh**—(1768—1822) was foreign secretary of Britain from 1812 to 1822.

**Marco Polo**—(1254—1324) was a Venetian traveller.

**Jonas Hanway**—(1712-1786) a European traveller.

**Corn Laws**—the laws forbidding the import of foreign corn in England. They were repealed by Lord Peel in 1846.

**Fox**—(1749—1806) Charles James Fox, was a great Statesman of Britain but was a notorious gambler.

**Brooke's**—a club in the eighteenth century, which was a centre of gambling.

**Cicero**—(106—43 B.C.) a Roman statesman and writer.

**Seneca**—a Roman philosopher, who was tutor of the emperor Nero.

**South Sea Bubble**—The South Sea Company was formed in 1711 to trade with Spanish America. The company failed in 1720.

**Parthenon**—a temple in ancient Athens.

**Michelangelo**—(1475—1564) an Italian painter and sculptor.

**Rembrandt**—(1606—1669) a Dutch painter.

**Charlotte Bronte**—a woman novelist of England.

**Mrs. Gaskell**—another woman novelist of England who wrote the life of Charlotte Bronte.

**Cosmo de 'Medici**—(1389—1464) a ruler of Florence and a celebrated patron of arts.

**Herodes Atticus**—(104—180) a Greek who spent his wealth in beautifying the city of Athens.

**Mithridates**—the kings of Pontus who attacked the Greeks.

**Isocrates**—(436—338 B.C.) an Athenian patriot and orator.

**Epaminondas**—a Theban soldier and statesman.

**Scipio**—(237—183 B.C.) a Roman conqueror, who conquered Spain and Hannibal.

## SURENDRANATH BANERJEA

**Surenranath Banerjea**—a great patriot, teacher and orator. Due to the firmness of his character and undaunted courage he was called as "Surrender Not" and also as "the Uncrowned King of Bengal". He was a

